dilemmas and opportunities

christian action in rapid social change

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July 25 - August 2, 1959

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PREFACE

The following statement was prepared at an international ecumenical study conference convened by the World Council of Churches' Department on Church and Society, and held, on the invitation of the Church of Greece, at Thessalonica, Greece, July 25 - August 2, 1959. The Conference met at Anatolia College. The meeting was the culmination of a four year study programme on "Our Common Christian Responsibility Toward Areas of Rapid Social Change" undertaken by the World Council of Churches through its Department on Church and Society. The purpose of the Conference was to appraise, from the Christian viewpoint, the present situation of rapid social change in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and to examine the task of Christians and churches in relation to that situation.

The Conference was attended by 146 participants, half of whom came from Asia, Africa and Latin America. The majority of the participants were laymen, economists, businessmen, labour leaders, sociologists, educators and students of social problems. The remainder were church leaders, theologians, mission leaders and pastors.

The chairman of the Conference was Prof. E. de Vries of Holland, who for four years has guided the rapid social change study as chairman of the WCC Department on Church and Society. He was assisted by Mr. Denys Munby of Great Britain as vice-chairman of the Conference and the Department.

The theme of the Conference "Christian Action in Rapid Social Change : Dilemmas and Opportunities" was considered under three sub-headings :

(i) *Man in Rapid Social-Cultural Change.*
(ii) *Christian Responsibility in Economic Development.*
(iii) *Christian Responsibility in Political Action.*

The Conference was divided into three working sections for discussion and consideration of these subjects.

Mr. Korula Jacob, the General Secretary of the Christian Council of India, served as chairman of the group on social-cultural change, and Professor K. A. Busia, a sociologist from Africa as rapporteur. The chairman of group II was Professor Mikio Sumiya, an economist from Japan, and Mr. Henry Makulu, an African educationalist from Northern Rhodesia was rapporteur. Dr. Edward Rogers of the Methodist Conference of Great Britain was chairman of the group discussing Christian responsibility in political life, and Dr. John C. Bennett, Professor of Christian Ethics, Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Mr. M. M. Thomas, Associate General Secretary of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, India, served as rapporteur and secretary.

The reports of these study groups have been combined to form the present document. The report was presented to the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches at its meeting on the island of Rhodes, August 19-27. After examining this report the Central Committee urged that the report "be widely discussed and critically studied by the churches. If the thinking embodied in this report is to permeate the life of the churches, efforts should be made to interpret and translate it into terms which stir Christian social thought in the local congregations."

Comments and inquiries on this ecumenical report are welcomed and should be addressed to the Department on Church and Society, World Council of Churches, 17, route de Malagnou, Geneva, Switzerland.

Geneva
November 1959

INTRODUCTION

What is Rapid Social Change?

The rapid social change taking place in the world today has the speed and the dimensions of revolution, but it is not a single revolution. Profound changes in culture, politics, economics and religion are all occurring together in many countries in the world. The past 400 years have seen various revolutions. In the Reformation, there was religious renewal; in the American and French Revolutions, struggles for freedom from foreign rule and for the rights of man; in the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, the use of science and reason for the service of man, and their embodiment in dynamic economic systems based on the new technology; in the Proletarian Revolution, the upsurge of demands for economic justice and the development of the social welfare state. For the most part, these revolutions are not completed; they are still going on and men still seek to achieve their aims.

In the rapid social change now under way in Africa, Asia and Latin America, these revolutions are all gathered into one; they take on vast new dimensions, especially in the African and Asian setting. The basic issues of each are being fought out simultaneously in nearly every country, although the stages differ from country to country. In the span of a single lifetime men are forced to grapple with immense unprecedented revolutions, affecting every aspect of national as well as most realms of personal life.

The power of these revolutions is closely connected with what they promise. They promise rapid improvements in standards of living; men hope to be able through science and technology to use natural resources to serve the needs and wants of men more abundantly. They hope that disease, scarcity and ignorance will be conquered. Along with all this goes the promise of greater justice and larger freedom — justice in the fairer distribution of

goods and services and in the provision of opportunities for human development, and freedom for a fuller life. There is hope too that man will gain not only power, but dignity and unity. With confidence in emancipation goes the challenge to men and women to help each other through the difficulties that accompany social change, and the responsibility to share the benefits it offers. Social change is a medium through which God acts to awaken the world anew.

All this takes place in a world overshadowed by the atomic bomb and the fear of atomic warfare. The world is torn by the struggle between the Western and the Communist countries. These fears of war and political dissensions exacerbate the already critical tensions of a world in social change.

Costs and Achievements in Rapid Social Change

Men must pay a price for the revolutions involved in rapid social change. A social revolution always involves suffering, even when it promises something better than the situation it seeks to change. The price which men are paying for the expected higher standards of living, and the fuller life of freedom, dignity and justice shows itself in various social problems. Rapid social change affects women perhaps more than men, changing relations between the sexes, as well as bringing material improvements in living which ease the drudgery of the daily round ; and releasing women for education and training so that they can serve more fully both their families and communities in the changing pattern of urban and rural life. But men and women who are flung from the country into cities and industry have to make adjustments, not only to new physical situations and social structures, but also to ways of life and ideas and goals which demand fundamental changes in outlook and personality. The price is seen in "lostness," loneliness, frustration and disillusionment ; in the strains and tensions in many areas of human relationships : in the family, between the generations, between employers and employees, between town and country, between different tribes and races

that confront each other in the multi-tribal, multi-racial communities [1] created by the demands of expanding industry and commerce.

Social change faces men with opportunities, dilemmas, and responsibilities ; they may use the new power it offers for good or evil. Whether it brings more good or more evil depends on man's response to the opportunities and challenges. The Christian is aware that rapid social change springs from human decisions and choices, is subject to man's sin and imperfection, and therefore comes under judgment. Its promises fill men with expectation ; but in pursuit of its goals, man's personalities, values, and social relations are affected in ways which challenge the Christian conscience. All this demands a response based upon the Christian faith and the Christian view of man and society.

Social change affects the human person profoundly. Man's expectations for the future are stirred and people are roused to fight for justice, freedom and dignity. Men and women are also asked to suffer. Sometimes they must suffer through no conscious choice of their own, but simply because they belong to a people which has become involved in these social and cultural changes, perhaps only in part through its own conscious efforts. Sometimes they choose to suffer, and to sacrifice their lives for their new vision and hope.

Victories are being won. They are won wherever the powers and forces of this multiple revolution are ruled and overruled by God for the accomplishment of His purposes of justice and righteousness among men. Victories are also won in the hearts and wills of people : in the Christian nationalist, who pleads for the fellowship of the church ; in the young worker in the slums of an industrial city who struggles with the problems of living in a bewildering new environment ; in the man whose soul is torn because the colour of his skin prevents him from getting justice, and who suffers the temptation of bitterness and hatred. These

[1] This is particularly true of African cities.

people are the symbols of many who are sacrificing themselves for their Lord and for their fellow men in family, village and city, and in the work of industry, education and government. In these struggles God is at work showing the signs of His power and glory.

The Christian Understanding of Rapid Social Change

The Christian attitude to social change is based on the Christian understanding of man and community, which is rooted in Christ and the establishment of His Lordship over the world, in creation and in His death and resurrection. Man and his communities must be understood from the viewpoint of the Lordship of Christ. The destiny of man leads him beyond all forms of human society by making him an heir of the Kingdom of God. Thus the man who is in Christ receives the freedom of the children of God and learns to consider all social processes as relative and not ultimate. This indeed gives them a positive meaning. For God loves, not only the Christians, but the whole world ; and all the revolutions of this world take place in some fashion under God's providence to serve the final goals of the Divine will of love.

In this context, "world" means the historical human society. Man is no isolated being, but essentially fellow-man, never alone, always belonging to his neighbour. The love of God, which calls him into the Kingdom of God, binds him at the same time to his neighbour. God has created us to be members of the human community, and this destiny is fulfilled by man through love. As human beings we are called to be responsible members, and as Christians, loving members of society. God's love for the world is what joins the Church and the world to each other, and calls the Church into the service of society.

This service is especially necessary, in the era of social revolution. The man who has to give up old patterns of life is in danger, when he loses his former social status and self-understanding, of having the foundations of his humanity, and above all his relations with God and with his neighbour, undermined. He is

brought into a state where he faces insecurity and isolation as a lonely individual. In this situation, the Church has the task, through word and action, of helping men to understand their true destiny, which is not only that they should, but that they can, live for God and their neighbours.

Though it may dissolve old links and forms of society which have hitherto supported man, modern technical civilisation creates many new opportunities of communication between continents, races and cultures, thereby providing new possibilities for the service of love. Furthermore, in technical society man is given new possibilities of exercising dominion over the earth. He is therefore confronted in a radical way with the question of his responsibility for the whole earth and the whole of human society. Does he desire to use his new powers to make himself the creator and redeemer of society ? Or will he, in the service of God, be the responsible participant in a society in which new relationships are developing and which understands its immense possibilities and powers as the liberty to serve God and his neighbour in a new way ?

The Christian understanding of man and community must lead to a radical interpretation of social change, which goes far beyond the usual pessimistic or optimistic evaluations. It leads to clearer appreciation of the moral ambiguities and choices in social change, in relation to which the Church and individual Christians must work under God for the creation of a responsible society.

The Church and Rapid Social Change

In its study over the last few years the Department on Church and Society of the World Council of Churches has been trying to live with this world of rapid social change and to see what it means for the churches. In many parts of the world we have seen churches becoming aware of the dimensions of the challenge and facing it. In a series of conferences particular issues have been discussed, affecting particular countries, or particular aspects of

the situation. For example, at Odense, in Denmark in 1958, European Christians faced anew their responsibilities towards the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. In Kuala Lumpur, in Malaya, in May 1959, the churches in Asia discussed the issues that affect their continent.[1]

In July, 1959 representatives from churches all over the world have come together in Thessalonica to look at the world-wide Christian response to rapid social change. The participants included people from all continents, but especially from Africa, Asia and Latin America, and they represented many different walks of life and many different churches. Above all, as perhaps never before on such occasions, the conference was conscious of hearing the voice of Africa, as on other occasions the voice of Asia has been heard. Some of the things in this report reflect this particular awareness of African conditions.

Three issues were taken for special study, because they are vital fields of concern for the churches : social and cultural change, economic development, and political action. It is recognised that there are other problems which may be of equal importance. None of the issues are treated exhaustively, and many things that are said may not be applicable to many countries. In particular it is to be noted that there is no discussion of the problems of that large part of the human race living under Communist rule. Likewise, attempts to maintain peace are vital to concerns, but this also was outside the scope of the discussion, though healthy social and economic change may itself contribute to the maintenance of stability and peace among nations.

This report makes a large number of suggestions, but it does not claim to have answers to all the problems. Christians as such may not claim any special technical competence which makes

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[1] The reports of these conferences are available from the World Council of Churches : (1) The Specific European Responsibilities in Relation to Africa and Asia (report from a European ecumenical consultation, Odense, Denmark, August 8-11, 1958) ; (2) The Witness of the Churches Amidst Social Change in Asia (excerpts from the report of the First Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference, Kuala Lumpur, May 14-24, 1959).

their specific proposals necessarily any wiser than those of other men, but they may offer certain Christian insights on these matters. Not all of the proposals here can be put into action immediately or quickly. It is not desired that the already heavy burdens of overworked pastors and church leaders be multiplied, nor should the importance of the normal pastoral task of the ministry be underestimated. This report, however, tries to see this ministry in a new dimension, and it sets out some of the things that the Church should be doing in this revolutionary situation in the hope they will encourage some and stimulate others.[1]

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[1] In this report we do not always distinguish between the responsibilities of so-called younger and older churches and of missionary societies. At specific points mention is made of the special responsibility of churches in Asia and Africa in contrast to churches in the West. In general the word churches is used in an inclusive sense to describe the work of Christian communions, including the missionary societies, which may be directly or indirectly operating in and through churches. At the Thessalonica Conference American and European missionary societies were well represented and their participants shared in the conclusions reached in this report.

PART ONE

MAN IN RAPID SOCIAL-CULTURAL CHANGE

I. Technology

II. The Family

III. Education

IV. Race

V. Religion

VI. The Response of the Church

PART ONE

MAN IN RAPID SOCIAL-CULTURAL CHANGE

Five areas of social-cultural life have been selected to illustrate the dilemmas and opportunities that face men in countries of rapid social change.

I. Technology

The discoveries of science give men ever-increasing possibilities of improving their standards of living. Since all men everywhere want to increase their consumption, they readily use the machines and techniques which science makes available to them. In the areas of rapid social change, the impact of technical change is seen in many human activities, primarily in production, transportation and consumption. There is an intimate connection between science, technology and the economic system. This shows itself in various ways. First, the process of scientific discovery is irreversible ; it is impossible to turn the clock back and behave as though the scientific discoveries and the technology based on them have not added to man's heritage. Secondly, the process of scientific discovery contains its own dynamic. Discovery begets discovery, and this succession is based upon the logic which makes science possible. Concepts imply and lead to other concepts with which they are inherently connected. Moreover, this dynamic operates at a constantly accelerating rate — a fact which underlies and causes much of the rapidity of social change. Thirdly, the application of scientific discoveries is ambiguous, and contains within itself both good and bad. To say that the whole complex of science and technology must always be thought of as a process that is irreversible, contains its own dynamic and is ambiguous, means that it is not easily directed by individuals or even by large groups.

This poses a particular problem of moral control. If the complex processes of scientific discovery and the application of science in technology were in themselves inert, to be activated at will by people here and there, the problem of control would not be acute. If they were merely neutral, that is, capable of use which had no moral consequences, the question of control would not be urgent. But dynamic forces, which are ambiguous, are a different matter. The existence of such forces poses a permanent problem for mankind, and for all who seek to use and develop them. The first point for the Christian evaluation of technology is that it involves a constant challenge to men to find ways of bringing it under the control of moral purposes, that is of purposes which work for the benefit of man.

In the situation of rapid social change, technology provides the fundamental hope for the liberation of mankind from poverty and disease. Economic and political organisation play an important part in the eradication of poverty, but the tools they use involve the powers of technology. Without its powers to produce and to heal, there would be little prospect of escape for the millions in the lands of rapid social change who live at or below subsistence levels.

Moreover, technology, as applied in Africa, Asia and Latin America, has opened the way for a high degree of social mobility, and promises to be an increasingly powerful force in this respect. The poor, or those who by traditional social custom are at the lower levels of society, may rise because of the opportunities which technology provides. Skills become more valuable to society than the old social strata ; workers and technicians find that new ways of life and a new social status are open to them, often enabling them to form new elites.

Insofar as technology makes possible the eradication of poverty and provides a new social mobility, it helps give man dignity, freedom and health. These are values for which the Gospel stands, and the Christian must welcome technological advance as a work of God for the true welfare of men.

An examination of the impact of modern technology upon a pre-industrial society also makes clear that it contributes to a breakdown of old values as well as providing the setting for new ones. Radical changes in family values, in man's relation to nature, in his attitude to work, in community and social structures, can be traced to the impact of technology upon these societies. Technology, however, cannot in itself supply the social and moral elements of the new patterns of culture which replace the old. This creates, for the Christian, situations both of danger and opportunity. There is danger because the breaking down of old values can be highly demoralising, as is often seen in many big cities and mining compounds, particularly in Africa. But in such situations Christians and the churches have an opportunity to present the Gospel to men who are seeking for light, so that they may see how to direct their lives in the new situation.

It seems to be true that, as technology advances and provides a new foundation for society, it increasingly becomes a problem for the Christian conscience. Poverty, in the West — as compared with Africa, Asia and Latin America — has been greatly reduced through the use of technology, and in some places all but eliminated. But problems arise in new forms. The growth of a pervasive impersonal element in society is evident. Whatever form this de-personalisation and de-humanisation takes, whether conformity to a general pattern of living amid material comfort, or the treatment of workers and their families as mere productive units, replaceable by other productive units without thought of their general well being, it is a challenge to the Christian conscience. We should not conclude that technology should be abandoned, but that Christians must strive to create the fundamental spirit and the varied conditions of social, economic and political organisation, so that technology can contribute to the full dignity and freedom of the human being.

A second problem lies in the human creativity which technology expresses, namely in the temptation of man to regard himself as a self-sufficient creator. It is almost inevitable that this should

be so, for science and technology place in the hands of men a power over nature to create, which is unprecedented. But this puts men in a serious spiritual situation. Although some may be led to ask ultimate questions about life, nature and God, others begin to feel that everything is possible through the achievements of modern science and technology. It is this element in the situation which constitutes the greatest danger, and where, above all, the Christian evaluation of men's use of science and technology must be most critical and outspoken. This critique rests on the fact that God is the creator of the world, of science and of technology alike, and that it is the resources of the world which He has created that are being exploited by science and technology. The positive element of this critique lies in the recognition that technology greatly expands the range and urgency of men's choices. If they abdicate from making responsible choices, the powers which technology provides become demonic. Rapid social change faces men with the necessity of choice and decision ; and the Christian response will be as Servants of God and as Stewards to whom much has been entrusted as science and technology is used in the work of subduing the earth.

II. The Family

In all societies the family is a unique social unit. Everywhere family ties are close and deep, and involve social, biological, economic and spiritual relationships. The institution of marriage on which the family is founded is everywhere a union recognised by custom and law, through a socially sanctioned procedure. It is a union normally expected to be stable and enduring, because it is concerned with fulfilment of personality and the procreation and rearing of children.

In areas of rapid social change, the traditional family, whether monogamous or polygamous, has usually been an extended family and a source of security and stability for the individual as well as for society. People knew where they and their family stood in the structure of society. Their duties, obligations and

privileges were defined and known. Everyone belonged to a group to which he owed duties and from which he could expect help.

Social change brings not only new opportunities, but also new problems, strains and tensions. There may be new opportunities in the small family for a richer and fuller family life and for greater individuality, for closer partnership, a fuller intellectual life, higher standards of living and better health. But often before these new heights can be attained, there are strains and difficulties to be overcome. Husband and wife may be drawn further apart, the children may receive less attention, and close relations may be made impossible by the demands of industrial life [1]. The home may become merely a dining-room and a bedroom. Life may become more insecure and unstable for all the members of the family.

In areas of rapid social change, this new concept of the small individual family is appearing and replacing the wider group. The degree to which it is the norm varies greatly, but it seems to be most developed precisely in those areas where rapid social change has gone the farthest. Because society still in general accepts the traditional family, those people who live in a "small individual family" are torn between two concepts of the family. This adds to the sense of "lostness" with which they face the modern world and at the most intimate point of their daily lives. Thus the family which has been the greatest source of security becomes the focus of many insecurities.

This is apparent in various aspects of family life today. What attitude should people take to the traditional concept of hospitality involving open house for all kinsfolk at all times? How are marriages to be arranged and preserved without all the safeguards of traditional experience? How can right relationships be maintained between the generations when normal tensions are greatly increased by rapid social change? What is the role of women in the new family situation when their status has been greatly altered by the processes of rapid social change?

[1] See later on African cities.

How can families be maintained at all when the demands of rapid social change mean in many instances that the man must live away from his family for long periods in order to gain a living in a money economy? Or when the woman has to work in order to supplement the family income, leaving the children to care for themselves? Who is to care for the aged and the sick? Who is to guide the youth?

These are but a few of the problems that bear on man in his family life as new family patterns evolve in areas of rapid social change.

We may call attention to a related problem: the "population explosion," which is threatening many countries around the world, faces parents with the problem of family planning. Governments in various Asian countries are giving much attention to the question of controlling the birth rate. Some encourage sterilisation; some even authorize abortion. The whole problem is fraught with implications for morals and theology, as well as for economics, politics and the family. It is urgent that the churches face the question frankly and realistically, if they are to help parents make responsible Christian decisions. Though the churches are not all agreed about scientific methods of contraception, it is to be noted that a large number have, in various degrees, taken a positive attitude to them. The supreme consideration of Christians in judging demographic problems should be family welfare, as the East Asia Christian Conference has strongly insisted.

The true character of the family is shown in love, partnership, humility and the sharing of all things. It should give opportunity also for developing a sense of duty, obligation, and responsibility. These qualities are displayed in the "traditional enlarged family" as well as the "small individual family," but the intimate monogamous family gives the best chance for their expression. It is, however, clear that the Christian demand for monogamy in a polygamous culture requires continued study if the Church is to cope realistically with the problems which

arise in such situations. It is in the monogamous family that the idea of Christian marriage can best be attained. In the Christian family, Christ lives and is acknowledged as Lord, and this gives a new and enduring sanctity to marriage. This means that for the Christian the family cannot be an end in itself. It is a new creation in Christ and it exists for Him. Thus the blood relationship involved in the family is not the decisive factor in its loyalties, and the obligations of the Christian family cannot be limited to its kinsfolk. It is equally concerned for all men. Members of the family are one's nearest neighbours, but the true mark of the family is that it does not live for itself, but for witness to its Lord in the Church and in all of society.

III. Education

The family is concerned with the rearing of children and with the preparation of the next generation for adult life. A consideration of the problems of the family would be incomplete without some study of the problem of education.

The Christian concept of education stems from the belief that God wills the salvation of every man and that human society is the context in which this high destiny of man is developed. The task of Christians in education, therefore, is to help people to grow into the "full nature and stature of Christ." To this end, education should help them to develop their abilities and gifts to the utmost and to use them in the service of their fellow men. The problem today is to realize this within the context of rapid social change. This means that all boys and girls have a right to an education suited to their abilities and needs, and that any form of discrimination in education on any grounds such as race, religion, caste or social group is wrong. It also means that education not rooted in religious belief lacks an essential element, and that Christians have a special responsibility for the provision of religious education.

Social change presents many dilemmas in this field. In many areas of Africa, Asia and Latin America the Church has led

the problem of securing the willingness of parents to permit their daughters to secure a full education. The prime responsibility of the Church here is to help its people to understand these changes and their significance, and to set the example for the full participation of women in the whole life of society.

In meeting these new opportunities and responsibilities, the churches will need the support of other agencies. The closest relations will naturally be with Christian bodies, such as the YWCA, YMCA, and SCM. In addition, it will help the churches to cooperate with other international agencies, such as the technical assistance agencies of the United Nations, where their programmes tie in with Christian activities in fields of common concern, e.g. UNESCO on Mutual Understanding between East and West; FAO in home-making projects, etc.

Finally, the need for the churches to develop an ecumenical strategy in the field of education in order to face this tremendous challenge should be emphasised. The problems of their own resources in finance, their experience and personnel, and the need for vital and creative projects in areas which require special witness or help, should all be dealt with in such an ecumenical strategy.

Very high priority should be given to the provision of interracial schools or colleges on a basis of complete freedom of access for all races and creeds, especially in areas of tension. Christian witness in this matter may well be decisive.

IV. Race

Improvements in transport and communications, and the opportunities offered by new industries bring people of different races into closer contact. Political and social problems in Africa, Asia and Latin America are often aggravated by serious racial conflicts. (Race is here used in its commonly accepted meaning as a distinct group of the one human family, *homo sapiens*.)

The problem of race is ultimately the problem of man's achieving right relations with all his fellow men and mankind's becoming the family of God. All men share a common humanity in Christ by creation and redemption, and for the Christian this transcends racial differences. Differences of colour and of physiognomy, of culture and of ethnic origin, are all part of the richness of God's creation. It is God's will that all men should live together in true brotherhood. Racial discrimination is but one of the many ways in which prejudice and injustice make this brotherhood impossible.

Our fundamental Christian charter is that Christ came to create one new redeemed humanity and that in Christ we are one. Until we set forth this unity in our churches, and witness to it in the world, we fall short in our obedience to Him.

Rapid social change both accentuates racial tensions and affords new opportunities for mutual understanding and co-operation. Increasing education and political emancipation, rising standards of living and new hopes for the future often provoke racial conflict where hitherto there has been a fatalistic acceptance of an under-privileged destiny. Large-scale immigration and other movements of peoples have frequently awakened latent racial antagonisms. The problem of race relations is becoming universal in the modern world. On the other hand, rapid social change and easier communications give unprecedented opportunities for people of different nationalities and races to meet and work together, and ideas of world culture and world brotherhood are in the air.

The responsibility of the Christian Church in all areas of racial tensions is acute, for Christians are themselves directly involved, both as citizens and as church members. Their task is not only to proclaim with a fresh urgency the relevance of the Gospel to all the issues that press on us, but also to exercise an active ministry of reconciliation. "Segregation in all its forms is contrary to the Gospel and is incompatible with the Christian doctrine of man and with the nature of the Church of Christ"

(Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Report on Intergroup Relations, 1954). It is therefore necessary for the churches "to renounce all forms of segregation or discrimination and to work for their abolition within their own life and within society" *(Ibid)*.

The whole Church has a pastoral function to fulfil in the realm of personal attitudes and relationships. Pastoral care is needed not only for those who have lost some special status they enjoyed, but also for those who continue to cling to privileges they will have to relinquish. It must be given to all who are afraid, to all in whose hearts there is bitterness and hate, on whichever side of the racial barrier they stand. What is called for is mutual forgiveness, which, though full of difficulty, is also full of hope.

But far more is required than helping individuals in their difficulties. Wherever possible, churches must work together and be prepared to cooperate with secular agencies, in urging legal remedies. They must give clear teaching on Christian principles regarding race, and promote a deeper understanding of actual situations of tension. They should also seek to ensure that teaching in day schools on subjects such as history and geography contributes to good relations, instead of arousing social antagonism. Christians individually must take whatever positive action they may find possible to foster better racial relationships. Recognising that it is all too easy, in seeking to remedy one injustice, to create another, they must seek to act with wisdom and care. But they must not let action be paralysed by the complexities of the situation. Similarly, great care must be taken that accuracy and restraint mark any pronouncements in which churches or individuals comment from outside on situations of racial tension ; nevertheless the prophetic voice must not be stifled.

Christians must recognise that, in spite of the clarity of the Gospel message and of Church pronouncements on racial issues, they themselves have often been as timid as, and less sincere

and less creative of human brotherhood than non-Christian groups, both religious and political. We are called to a greater honesty, to real penitence, and to a deeper consecration to our Christian task. We must submit, at whatever cost, to the compulsion of the Gospel's demands.

On racial issues, the ecumenical perspective is a tremendous asset. We urge the WCC to devise ways of making available the resources of all the churches to those which are in positions of special difficulty. We would also point out the value of conferences at which Christians of different races from areas of special tension may meet together, even if they do not discuss racial issues as such.

V. Religion

In areas of rapid social change, the villager moves to the town to earn a living : families are separated ; traditional institutions break down ; new adjustments have to be made. Faced with new situations of bewildering perplexity, the individual tries to gain security by conserving old values, or by trying to re-interpret old faiths to provide support in the uncertain situations of social change.

In Asia we see a resurgence of the non-Christian religions in areas of rapid social change. The roots of this revival are complex. The preaching of the Gospel itself evoked a re-interpretation of age-old concepts, such as that of the unreality or illusory nature of the phenomenal world. Other factors contributing to this resurgence have been the impact of science and Western civilisation (causing the ancient faiths to seek "reconciliation" with the scientific outlook) ; of ideas of political freedom (in reaction to which security has been sought in the conservative power of traditional faith), and of the new nationalism (which has turned to historic cultures as a powerful ally).

Rapid social change has demanded a new evaluation of man's nature and destiny. Thus in India, the abolition of caste

discrimination under the new Constitution and the granting of human rights to those who had been outcasts, as well as the promotion of basic liberties and responsibilities under democratic forms of government, have all led to a new understanding and acceptance of individual rights and human dignity. At the same time a new appreciation of the wholeness of life has begun to develop ; life in this world, with a new emphasis upon body and mind, has been given intrinsic value, whereas the soul and its salvation was formerly the only concern.

In Africa what we see is not so much a resurgence of ancient religion, as the continuance of traditional interpretations of man particularly in his relations with nature. Has Christianity developed a doctrine of nature adequate to the practical demands of the African in his concern for right relations with, or control of, nature ? A Christian in Africa may reject heathen practices, yet often he continues to share the unformulated assumptions which lie behind them. Rapid social change throws man back upon the traditional "world view," which the churches have often failed to understand. Meanwhile the old African religions and the "prophet" religions are adapting their teachings to meet modern situations and to attract the Christian, while fundamentally they continue to rely upon traditional culture.

Our Christian faith in God as Lord of history calls us to see His purpose working through this stimulus to the adherents of the ancient religions to re-think their faith. Here we have our opportunity to find a place of real encounter with them. Along with them we have to seek the living word of God amid the circumstances of our time. We must proclaim to them the revelation of God in Christ, and the active redemptive work of Christ, which we believe to be available to all. Equally we have to take full account of the secular humanist and Marxist philosophy of the Western world, and the recrudescence of superstitious attitudes in the West. In all this we see God creating a new need and opportunity for faith in the Gospel.

We see religion as paradoxically both provocative of change and resistant to it. It is itself a manifestation of the power of change (although basic belief is less subject to change than the social aspects of life). It also has power to meet the stresses and strains of change by giving both comfort and direction, and by aiding cultural renaissance. Yet the Gospel itself demands a radical change *(metanoia)* in both individual and society. Rapid social change affords fresh opportunities for us to see its relevance.

In formulating the issues in the rapid social change study it was correctly stated: "Christians need to study such religious resurgence seriously and critically, and help in finding ways of meeting the desperate cultural and religious needs to which such revivals are an attempted response. It is at this point that the study of rapid social change needs to follow carefully the study of a Christian approach to the non-Christian religions." (2nd Statement for the Rapid Social Change Study, p. 9.) This calls for serious study and genuine encounter with man in his actual faith, not a superficial and doctrinaire "understanding." In particular the Christian needs to develop his own understanding of the Christian doctrine of man and of nature. He has to realise and proclaim that the Church is not tied to any particular social structure, but subjects every structure to the judgment of the Gospel. He can bring sympathetic understanding to the man who is forced to live in the two worlds of ancient culture and belief and of modern social flux. In answer to those who claim that all human problems can be solved by science, he has to proclaim a fully Incarnational theology, dealing with the wholeness of man's life and the wholeness of mankind. His greatest responsibility and opportunity is that of witness through sacrificial deeds.

As Christians, we have honestly to face the fact that there are many situations today in which both politics and religion are divisive elements in society, and where humanism, with its *concern for man as man*, seems to be the *only* possible basis for

that unity which people desperately seek. The Church is thus challenged to interpret the Lordship of Christ as the basis for social unity and solidarity.

VI. The Response of the Church

From the foregoing, it will be quite clear that the Christian response to rapid social change cannot be "withdrawal." The conviction that God is at work in this momentous revolution among men means a calling to the churches to work with Him in it. But it will also be clear that Christians cannot plunge with uncritical enthusiasm into all the historical situations in which they are working. To be critical in this sense does not mean to be hesitant. It means to live and work under God who is beyond all historical events, but who is in all the affairs of men in Christ, continuing His redemptive work in which it is the mission of the Church to participate.

The response of Christians and the churches to rapid social change cannot be put in terms of a blueprint, and it will vary from place to place in its practical expression. The following paragraphs are meant to suggest first what the Christian response must be in terms of the total calling of the Church, in terms of its basic functions and roles. They are also meant to point out that rapid social change contains a special challenge to each of the functions of the Church. At every point, a radical rethinking of the present life, structure and forms of Christian witness is demanded. This must proceed by experiment, as Christians seek the will of their Lord amidst the dilemmas and the opportunities of rapid social change.

The evangelistic function of the Church in rapid social change

God, who in His love sent His Son into the world, also sent His Church into the world for its redemption and reconciliation. The apostolate is therefore the deepest expression of the Church's concern for man. This concern is that all men should be in right relation to God — that they should be brought to acknowledge Christ as Lord and to live in Him.

While this is the calling of the Church in all ages and conditions, the fact of rapid social change presents peculiar opportunities as well as problems. In many lands people are seeking to build a new social order on principles demanding a new conception of man. Only the Christian faith can provide an adequate context for this, and in this we can find an opportunity for a fruitful encounter with non-Christians. The attraction that various ideologies and cults have for bewildered people challenges the Church to confront them with the living God. The Gospel is relevant; the Church's task is to be open to new ways of making it heard in the midst of social change.

The situation of social change is inevitably a situation of tension and potential strife. If the Church is to respond to this situation with the message of reconciliation, it must show in its own life the marks of reconciliation. The churches cannot effectively proclaim the Gospel to man while they are divided confessionally, racially and socially. The first call therefore to our churches is to repentance and renewal of life.

The task of the Church is to discover how the deep change which the Gospel demands in man is relevant to the radical change at present taking place in society. This calls for an urgent re-thinking, within the ecumenical movement, of the theology of mission and evangelism, and a re-appraisal of our patterns of witness. It will also involve the creation of new structures of Christian unity.

The situation in Africa, Asia and Latin America also emphasizes for us that the communication of the Gospel must be the concern of the whole Church and of every member of it and not just the preoccupation of a few professionals or specialists in evangelism. Communication implies community, being with men and sharing their deepest needs and concerns. Only in this context can the Christian truly share the Good News of reconciliation; and this community with men is only possible when the Christian is in constant communion with

God, in the fellowship of His people and under the judgment and mercy of His Word.

The pastoral function

The Church is the Body of Christ whose members share the same life in Christ through worship, the Sacraments and fellowship. They care for each other and employ God's gifts for the common good. The Church is called, as a corporate body and through its members, to continue Christ's ministry of sacrificial love in the world, and to care for all men, "the brothers for whom Christ died." This caring for all men, whether Christian or not, constitutes the pastoral function of the Church.

The social change of our time has focussed attention upon many human needs, but especially:

— The need for community, because of the loneliness of people who are wrenched from their natural communities and caught in a fragmented society;

— The need for men to understand what is happening in their mastery of nature through science and technology, in the changing patterns of family and society, and in the loss of authority of old accepted values;

— The need for human dignity, freedom and justice in a world riddled with exploitation, racial and class discrimination, and political oppression and economic injustices.

These and other needs are a challenge to the pastoral ministry of the Church at fundamental points.

Worship. In the Church's worship believers are gathered together from their work-a-day world in the Name of Christ; an occasion for bringing before God in the presence of his people the actual, concrete needs of all men. The Word and the Sacraments ought to be administered in such a way as to demonstrate clearly God's will and action, so that believers might return to their tasks in society filled with God's love for mankind.

The churches must seriously ask why, in so many countries, people do not avail themselves of the means of grace which can speak to them in their need. In some countries, it may be a matter of outworn, or imported, forms of worship which are irrelevant to their needs. In others, it may be that the time and style of services do not take into account changes in the patterns of peoples' lives and thinking. Everywhere there is need for a renewed understanding of the meaning and significance of worship for man's life in the world.

Fellowship. One of the characteristic marks of the Church is fellowship, which is shown in the various institutions and patterns developed to meet the needs of congregations. But many of these patterns fail to meet modern man's need for community. To a large extent, they represent responses to needs which are no longer pressing or to the needs of a particular class or group. The churches are themselves often involved in the fragmentation of society, as race or class churches, or because they give the impression that they are concerned with individual rather than with community needs.

Can our churches understand what is happening in changing communities and courageously experiment with new forms of community for the lonely and the bewildered? Some have established hostels and homes for persons displaced from their own environments, and neighbourhood groups for those living in new residential areas; in some areas churches cooperate with civil authorities and voluntary groups on similar projects. For individual Christians, it involves service to some people in places of work and elsewhere, and learning to intercede constantly for others. It involves creating new relations between people of different races, classes and professions, and between management and labour.

Teaching. The Church has always to educate its members in the faith, and help people to discern in the light of the Word of God what is happening to them and around them. Special

attention is needed in the case of intellectuals, industrial workers and other groups alienated from the churches. For this task, clergy and laity need to be well equipped spiritually and theologically.

In areas of rapid social change, the clergy are far too often insufficiently trained for the teaching ministry. Great emphasis must be put on the training of clergy and laity, improving standards of theological education and releasing the clergy from administrative and secondary activities for their proper function of preaching, teaching and pastoral counselling. There is special need for better training of pastors in Christian social ethics related to the real problems of social change, and they for their part have a responsibility to train the laity for their evangelistic and pastoral work in society.

Service. The Church has traditionally pioneered in service to men, through hospitals, schools and other social services. Today governments are taking over many of these services. But human need remains and the churches must find new ways of meeting it. They must constantly lay upon Christians their responsibility to use their abilities in such service. Later sections of this report suggest some of the new forms of service that are needed in areas of social change.

The prophetic function. We believe God is at work in rapid social change, accomplishing the purposes of His Kingdom. This does not mean that all that happens in rapid social change is good, but it does mean that God cares for those in need; that He is bringing forth more justice and equality; that He is awakening multitudes of men to challenge the social stagnation in which they find themselves, and opening up new possibilities for the development of personal and social life.

Christians and churches are called to be with God in His work in rapid social change. To be with God means to be able to discern where He is at work, and where developments in society are demonic. It means to be used by Him in the midst

of rapid social change, so that there may be clear and convincing signs of His Kingdom for men to see and follow. This is what we understand to be the prophetic function of the Church — to be the watchman, discerning where God is and where the enemy is, warning men of danger. But the task of the watchman is performed not only in speech, but by the character and power of his Christian life, and the suffering he will endure for the sake of Christ.

Discernment of the way in which God is at work in rapid social change requires two things — utter dependence upon God, a constant, sensitive listening to Him in His Word and in prayer, and a thorough immersion in and identification with the suffering of the world. Most of us hardly meet these requirements because of our isolation from the world in which we are set. The first task of our churches is to help us overcome this isolation.

If Christians are to fulfil their prophetic calling, they must devote time to studying the facts of the situation, making use of disciplines such as sociology, psychology, economics and political science. This is necessary because, without knowing the trends in society, it is impossible to discern clearly and realistically the way in which God is at work. True understanding also requires identification with those who struggle and suffer with evil.

By this twin process of involvement and knowledge the true needs of men become known and appreciated. This is the point at which the churches' prophetic function is connected with social strategy. The social needs of men will vary from time to time and from place to place. In every situation new thinking is required about the standards of social action and the basic social strategy of the Church. The crucial areas where strategy must be determined are those discussed in this and the following section.

The Church must not only show the way, but issue warnings. The churches will have to speak plainly about the dangers in

social change. Young people who have lost a sense of direction; people who are caught up in the passions of social conflict; these and many others need to hear the Church's message of responsible living interpreted in terms of the realities of the world they confront.

PART TWO

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY IN POLITICAL ACTION

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PART TWO

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY IN POLITICAL ACTION

I. The Christian Basis for Political Responsibility

The Christian basis for political responsibility is derived from a deeper and more pervasive social responsibility, for politics is the means by which society seeks to achieve goals in many areas of its life including the cultural and economic. Even though there are distinctively political goals which have to do chiefly with the preserving of order and the improvement of the processes by which decisions are made, these should not be emphasized apart from the social goals for which political institutions are instrumental.

Our social responsibility is grounded in the revelation in Christ of God's reign. This reign concerns the whole of world history and we must not limit our acknowledgement of it to personal or religious affairs. We are called to manifest God's universal reign now in the faith that it will be fully revealed in God's time. Though man cannot expect by his efforts to establish a perfect society in this world, we do serve the reign of God when we strive to attain particular goals of justice, freedom and peace.

The following elements in the Biblical revelation of God's purpose are especially relevant to the social aspect of our obedience to him :

— the commandment of love for our neighbour, when it is understood concretely that our neighbours are affected for good or evil by social institutions, by the behaviour of nations and other social groups, by our own decisions and actions as citizens ;

— the emphasis upon God's caring for the people who are victims, "the poor who are sold for a pair of shoes," "the least of these" who are hungry and naked or in prison ;

— the call to repentance which meets us as whole persons for whom personal sin includes involvement in the corporate sins of the groups to which we belong; in the Biblical teaching concerning the unity of body and spirit which is illustrated by our empirical knowledge of the ways in which the spiritual welfare of people is affected for good or evil by the external conditions of their life;

— the existence of the Church which is set in the midst of the world with responsibility for all men as children of God, whose members are expected to care for one another because "if one member suffers all suffer together."

Political responsibility refers to action in the sphere of government. It involves the application of the authority and power of the State to the solution of the problems of society. Much social responsibility is outside the political field and is concerned with the action of voluntary groups within various economic and social institutions which are partly independent of the State. But inevitably the scope of State activity has increased in our modern complicated societies because of the need for simultaneous action on many fronts for the common welfare on a large scale with power to enforce compliance. This is particularly the case in the nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America where much of the economic and social development is planned and directed by the State.

Christian teaching gives the political order as embodied in the government of a State an essential but limited place in the purpose of God. The New Testament recognizes political authorities as ordained by God to establish and preserve a just order of society under his rule. This usually means for Christians loyal and responsible participation in the work of government. The nature of that participation depends on the type of State. When active political participation is impossible, Christians still have responsibility for the State, a responsibility which may have to express itself in extreme cases in resistance

to a particular government, often at great cost to themselves because of their obedience to God rather than men.

II. The Witness of the Church in its Own Life

In all its activity, and in every social situation, the Church exists to bear witness to the present role of God, to set forth the sovereign demands of holiness and righteousness. Sometimes it is a small minority within a nation ; sometimes it is numerically strong. But it should never be a political association using religion as a means to a political end. We are the servants of Christ. Our political concern springs from the imperatives of the Gospel, and through our political service we seek to serve His Kingdom.

Sometimes it seems to be assumed that political action by the Church means always and only intervention in terms of rebuke, condemnation, or prophetic plain speaking. There are situations in which such action is necessary. But so too, and more continually, the response of the Church should be in a ministry of healing and reconciliation and positive witness to the demands of justice. Nor must we forget the significance of our actions and example within the life of the Church. Judgment must first begin in the house of God, and we must direct plain speaking to ourselves as well as to the general community.

The fact is that we so often say the right things and yet our deeds undermine the authority of our words. Consider, for instance, the question of racial discrimination. St. Paul could speak with authority about reconciliation, for in the Church of the first century it was obvious to all that the middle walls of partition were being broken down. Bitterly hostile and mutually scornful Jews and Gentiles were in fact being reconciled within the Church. We declare the Christian word that condemns social discrimination, but behind our declaration looms the shadow of the middle walls of partition being built up within the Church by fear and prejudice.

The Report of the Assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference (Kuala Lumpur, May 1959) truly said: "A form of society and a programme of political action cannot be derived from the Gospel. But effective exercise of Christian responsibility in political life requires a knowledge of the concrete political realities and techniques, and the capacity to evaluate alternate possibilities in the light of the revealed purpose of God for man and society."

This means that the Church must seek to give pastoral guidance to Christians on important political issues, so as to stimulate sensitive awareness, to foster sympathetic understanding of the complex realities of the situation confronting the politicians, and to enable comment to be made or action taken before an issue has been decided. To do this some method of education in Christian citizenship should become part of the organizational structure of the Church. Where some such organization as a Commission on Social Responsibility or Department of Christian Citizenship functions as part of the regular activity of the Church, this pastoral guidance can be given. Machinery is thus provided for the systematic consideration of important issues, for direct contact with local churches, and for communication with political or industrial authorities. The work on Christian responsibility in national political problems of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society affiliated to the National Council of Churches of India, is one of the best examples of ecumenical action of this type. We must not despise organization, for it may facilitate more effective service. We believe that this form of organization within the structure of the Church, will enable us to keep continually before us this vital aspect of the fullness of the Gospel.

III. Religion and the State

There are innumerable patterns in the relation between religion and the State. The traditional European patterns of national or state churches may under some conditions be acceptable

in the countries of their origin but they cannot be transplanted. Whatever their positive value, neither is desirable unless provision is made for the religious liberty of minorities, unless the Church can win freedom from control by the State in its own life and witness, and unless each national Church demonstrates its supranational character by maintaining close relations with churches in other countries.

In this report we are concerned primarily with the relations between religion and the State in the countries of rapid social change, countries which usually have not been traditionally Christian and which are in the process of nation building and therefore have to work out the relationship between religion and the State. Whether or not there is within these countries one dominant non-Christian religion, there is some measure of religious pluralism and large portions of the population have been secularized. In these countries Christians should work for the development of a State which is neutral as between the various religions represented in it. Sometimes this is called a "secular state," but this should be distinguished from a State which promotes "secularism," or which is based upon dogmatically secularist assumptions. Such a neutral or secular State should give encouragement to religion without providing special privileges to any one group.

There are two kinds of neutrality: one, of which India is an example, where the State considers religion as outside the sphere of its direct responsibility and does not interfere except to protect the right of every person to choose any religion or no religion; the other, of which Indonesia is typical, where the State concerns itself with the religious welfare of the people by directly promoting the several historic religions of the country. Both of these patterns have their own advantages and raise their own difficulties. The first easily tends to encourage that secularism which denies that religion has any right to remind the State that it lives under the law of God; the second in practice tends to strengthen the religion of the majority. The tempta-

tion to interpret religious tolerance as recognition of the equality of all religions is strong in some countries, and it may limit the freedom of missionary religions like Christianity and in effect deny or limit the right of a man to change his religion. Christians should be aware of these dangers and should, in co-operation with others, be vigilant lest freedom of conscience be threatened.

In this context we are speaking of Christianity as one religion among others because the Christian Church does act as a religious institution, but it should be recognized that as a religion Christianity always remains under the judgment and inspiration of the revelation of God in Christ which transcends all human religious institutions and practices including those which are "Christian."

One essential test of the pattern of relationship between religion and the State is the provision which the State itself makes for freedom of religious expression. The kinds of expression which Christians emphasize cannot be separated from the freedom of citizens as citizens. For example, freedom of worship involves the more general freedom of assembly, and freedom to preach and to witness publicly to Christian truth is inherent in the more general freedom of speech and of the press which should be available to all citizens.

However, Christians have a special compulsion to work for religious liberty, since they already possess freedom in Christ which is the freedom to obey him in word and deed. The Christian as an individual and the Christian community are under obligation from the Gospel to claim freedom to worship and to witness. Christian obedience also involves prophetic criticism of the State. No constitutional provisions can fully guarantee to the Christian and the Church freedom to obey Christ. We can expect in the best ordered societies in a sinful world to have tensions and conflicts between Christians and the State. Our hope should be for the establishment of constitutional provisions for religious freedom, but we are under the commandment

to witness and to act in obedience, to press for the substance of religious freedom and not merely for the legal form. When Christians say: "We must obey God rather than men," they often find themselves extending the range of freedom for themselves and for others. These things are not said to belittle the authority and power of the State under God in its own sphere. It is a providential instrument of order and justice and of the common welfare, and yet it is continually tempted to extend itself beyond its proper sphere, and when it does so, there is often an occasion for conflict between Christians and the State.

The religious freedom of which we speak should include at least the following elements. It should safeguard for the individual and for the religious community freedom of worship and of teaching within the community and freedom for the community to govern itself. It should also safeguard freedom of public witness, freedom to propagate the Gospel, and this implies recognition of the right of a person to change his religion. Also, religious freedom implies opportunity for the religious institution to acquire the material means for its existence and for its work. The soundness of this last requirement for religious liberty should not obscure the temptations which often cause churches or other religious institutions to ask too much for themselves. Pressure upon the State in the interests of the Church's privileges has so often marred the record of the Church where it has been strong, that we should be on guard against this temptation while we ask for freedom and opportunity to do its work. Not only should it be reminded continually that this work is an expression of its obedience to Christ; it should also be reminded of the many ways in which it has used the name of Christ to advance the special interests of Christians as one part of the community. Also, the Church should remember that God can work through it even when it is deprived of the external opportunities which seem so essential.

How and why should Christians in a religiously pluralistic society cooperate with non-Christians? This is an important

question in every area considered in this study. Christians should and do work within religiously mixed political parties and other associations such as trade unions. Christians and non-Christians belong together in their communities and face the same necessities of life. They often share common goals and concern for the same values. Frequently sensitivity to the same human values is a consequence of Christian influence on the culture but this is not the only factor. Such shared goals and values have other sources in human experience under the providence of God. The problem is that the significance of such co-operation is only rarely considered and is often given in a grudging or patronizing spirit. Co-operation with non-Christians, whether they are the adherents of other religions or are without any religious affiliation, should be governed by respect for them as persons, respect for the sincere conviction and integrity of spirit that we find in them. Christians can learn from them, not only because they may have special knowledge and experience for which Christian insight is no substitute, but also because Christians can often be corrected by the response of outsiders to their ways of understanding and implementing their faith. Every group needs to see itself as outsiders see it. Indeed, often the rejection of Christianity by their neighbours may be in part caused by sins and failures within the Christian community which obscure the truth of the Gospel.

Christian responsibility to witness to the Gospel is never suspended, but this does not mean that occasions of co-operation with non-Christians should be used to bring pressure upon or to manipulate neighbours and fellow workers. Such a practice would be self-defeating, but even more, it would be a sin against the integrity of other persons.

IV. Christian Citizenship and Politics

We have already emphasized the fact of Christian political responsibility. Even efforts to escape from political responsibility have political consequences. Inaction may itself be a form of political action.

Political action implies participation in parties and movements made up of people from various religious backgrounds and which, at best, are controlled by the interests of dominant groups within them as much as by moral purposes. Membership in any party or movement that gains enough power to influence legislation and national policy necessarily involves compromises and moral conflicts for Christians. Yet they should not remain aloof from those parties or movements which they believe have the greatest promise. Christians will often differ sincerely in their judgments about political parties and movements and it is to be expected that they will be found in opposing political camps. But even this does not necessarily mean that they cancel out each other's contribution, because in the dialogue, rivalry, and conflict between parties it is important for Christians to act as leaven on both sides. In practice this presents great difficulties because it may seem to some Christians that their Christian political opponents, however sincere they may be are in fact undercutting the Christian position, and this makes it difficult to preserve religious unity with them.

In some situations parties arise which are so inconsistent with Christian purpose that Christians as such and churches as churches should oppose them; this is quite different from the positive identification of the Church with any political party. For example, the churches should oppose any party which favours anti-Semitism, totalitarianism, or discrimination on grounds of race or colour. However, it is only too true that when such parties have emerged in the past their ranks have included many churchmen.

The organization of Christian parties or political movements except as a temporary measure in certain circumstances generally has more disadvantages than advantages. They lead to a misunderstanding of Christianity because they identify it too closely with specific programmes; because they lend a Christian sanction to movements and policies which are ambiguous; because they draw away needed Christian influence from other parties;

because they tend to add religious bitterness to political conflicts and thus divide the community at a deeper level than is necessary. We must constantly guard against the desire of political movements to use religion for their own purposes.

While Christians should work within political parties, they can never be absolute in their partisanship, even in their struggles for the highest political goals. This does not mean, however, that as members of a party, they should not in ordinary circumstances accept the party's discipline.

No general guidance, apart from the awareness that comes from participation in concrete situations, can be given concerning the limits of compromise. It is clear that such limits exist in all situations, but they usually have to be determined in the light of inside knowledge of the situation, especially with understanding of the real alternatives. Compromise is present in the adjustment of interests and opinions, and it is necessary if there is to be enough agreement for common action. Compromise is also unavoidable in the form of co-operation with those who may seem to us to support a programme for the wrong reasons, for most political parties are in part the expression of special interests and tend to be one-sided in representing them. Perhaps Christians have to make their most difficult choices in periods of disorder or revolutionary change when they must choose between an indefensible conservatism on the one hand and, on the other, revolutionary movements, which may seek good ends by ruthless and violent means and which stir up hatred and fanaticism. In these situations it is important to remember that the defenders of the *status quo* may have so much political or economic power that they do not need to resort to overt violence to get their way, but that in a crisis they too may become involved in violence beyond all bounds of law and justice. Part of the ministry of the Church is to help its members live with these decisions under the mercy and leading of God.

There are situations in which no avenue of direct political activity is open to the Christian. But this does not mean his political responsibility ceases. Rather he must live in hope for

a new situation in which new possibilities of political action will be open. And in the meantime he must wait in prayer before God, be alert for signs of new opportunities, and work in non-political associations, in person-to-person relations and within the Church, to preserve what is good and humane in the culture and to prepare the way for the future.

We have spoken only of political problems within a nation. It is not our task to deal with matters of foreign policy, but we should distort the picture of domestic politics if we made no reference to the fact that among the most fateful decisions of political action are those which affect international relations and the domestic political life of other nations. Christian sensitivity in politics must not be limited by national boundaries. In particular in this context we emphasize the ways in which action within one nation may promote political and economic oppression and poverty in another nation.

The Church as Church in most countries needs to take a new approach to politics. It should not identify itself with a political movement, though it may, on occasion have to oppose a political movement for the sake of a fundamental human right, but it must overcome the tendency to suggest that politics is a shady occupation. Often churches look down on politics because of its compromises while they regard business as morally respectable in spite of its compromises.

In some countries there is a variety of associations which are devoted to particular objectives or to the discussion of particular issues, e.g. the overcoming of racial discrimination, the promotion of civil liberties, the improvement of education, peace between nations. These associations often do much to inform public opinion and to influence rival parties. They are not substitutes for parties but Christian citizens can often make an important contribution by working within them.

While we emphasize the importance of a Christian vocation in politics, we should not assume that Christians should necessarily support a Christian political leader in preference to a

non-Christian. This is obviously true when the former is only a nominal Christian, but it may also be true even when he is sincere and devout in his religious commitment, for these qualities must, in view of the public responsibilities of political office, be weighed carefully against competence and relevant experience. Also, it is important to consider the interests which support a man, for a political leader of even great Christian integrity may be forced to serve interests which are narrow or predatory.

The churches in many areas are now making efforts to maintain close ties with their members in political life, seeking new ways to help them to be guided by the Christian understanding of God's purpose and man's nature. They seek to bring together those who have common problems as citizens or as politicians so that they may learn from each other. This is undoubtedly one of the most important and difficult tasks facing the churches in areas of rapid social change. In many situations its fulfilment requires great Christian wisdom and courage. When possible, the churches should help to reconcile opposing forces by assisting their members on both sides of a conflict to meet with each other, not in order to cover up their differences but to face them together as Christians. Emphasis should always be laid on the special temptations to self-deception in each political group, upon the effects of all political decisions upon people, and upon a broad and generous attitude towards the needs of other nations. If so, the pastoral task of the Church, to keep an understanding of the divine judgment upon every political movement and decision in closest relation to an understanding of the mediation of divine grace to those who are disturbed by that judgment is very heavy and urgent. The churches must prepare themselves carefully to carry out this important role.

V. Political Institutions

In the accelerating social, economic and political transitions within the areas of rapid social change, nations are being pulled sharply and painfully between conflicting tendencies in the development of their political institutions. The strong attraction

exercised by freedom and justice for the individual, and active personal participation in political life, pulls them toward democracy. The sense of great tasks that need to be accomplished quickly, demanding a government strong and decisive enough to deal immediately with the urgent problems of national development, pulls them toward authoritarian, even totalitarian, rule.

The results already achieved in Russia and the gigantic effort to transform China make Communism appealing as a quick method of achieving economic development, securing structural social changes and satisfying national pride, albeit at a high cost in terms of the dignity and freedom of the human spirit. It is indeed a tragedy that Marxist Communism, which is in so many ways effective in securing social and economic changes, should involve such total ideological claims. Because of this, it seeks to control the whole of culture; it fails to understand the deeper dimensions of the human person; in becoming a substitute for religion and in teaching an anti-religious dogma, it leaves no place for the recognition of the judgment and mercy of God who transcends all societies. These total ideological claims in Communism Christians must reject.

We would draw attention to the carefully balanced statement made by the East Asia Christian Conference in May 1959.

"Is parliamentary government the best method in all circumstances for preserving those Christian values enshrined in the word democracy? And is not the development of more authoritarian systems in certain circumstances a more effective means of safeguarding them? These questions are being asked in East Asian countries today. Democracy, defined as a system of government holding freedom, order and justice in balance, can be distinguished from democracy as a parliamentary method of controlling government. But when parliamentary methods of control over the power of government are abandoned, the Christian, who knows the danger of the corruption of power, is bound to ask what other methods of checks and balances are available in alternative systems. Ultimately, a system of govern-

ment will be tested by its capacity to develop a sense of community among its people, to achieve their deliverance from economic bondage and preserve the basic liberties of individuals and associations. It is our conviction that this balance of objectives will be best preserved only by a democratic system. The challenge before the East Asian countries is to find an indigenous and dynamic form of democracy. It is not necessary to adopt patterns worked out in the different circumstances of Western society; but our forms should provide strong government committed to national integration and national development and, at the same time, a government answerable to the people."

Curtailments of democratic life, whether by limitation of the franchise or by an excessive increase of executive power, exist in the areas with which we are concerned. The Christian who is alert to such situations will seek to take whatever steps his conscience may dictate toward the establishment or re-establishment of full and responsible democratic government. Unfortunately, not many churches are prepared to help amid the difficulties their members face in these circumstances. In this connection the practical function of opposition parties in relation to national unity and to national economic development in areas of rapid social change requires serious study.

VI. Dynamics of Nationalism in Areas of Rapid Social Change Today

Nationalism in the present world is one of the most powerful forces in human affairs. Yet it defies any exclusive definition. Most writers on the subject have listed a number of attributes of a nation, chief of which are common race, land, language, government, culture and religion. But as groups which lack one or more of these major qualities have developed a sense of nationhood, we are driven to conclude that while a nation must possess some of these attributes, the main motive force of nationalism is the desire of a group of people to come together in order to create their own independent government, to take their

place as a recognised unit among the nations, to express their own group individuality and to make what they consider to be their special contribution to the world. This motive force of nationalism sustains the long-established nations and also inspires the creation of new ones. It expresses itself in different ways in these two processes and it also takes different forms in the changing conditions of the world.

In the earlier years of the ecumenical movement, and particularly at the Oxford Conference of 1937, the subject of nationalism was fully discussed. But in view of the circumstances at that time, the attention was concentrated almost exclusively on the nationalist movement in Western countries. The specific task in the light of the present situation is to concentrate on a different kind of nationalism in a different phase of history in the areas of rapid social change, especially Asia and Africa.

What follows therefore should be considered as a discussion neither of the universal phenomenon of nationalism nor even of the nationalism of Asia and Africa for all times ; it is a consideration of nationalism at a certain stage in the development of the peoples of Asia and Africa. Latin American nationalism has not received adequate attention in this report.

The nationalism of hitherto subject peoples and races gives tangible form to their awakening to a sense of human dignity and their struggle to discover and express their corporate selfhood. This nationalism finds the focus of its unity in the sense of common fate and common fight, that is, in the common determination of peoples to free themselves from alien political domination and racial discrimination. Several of the Asian and African peoples have behind them a long history, ancient religions and cultures, widely used languages, and local government and monarchical political traditions. Pride in indigenous traditions is one of the most powerful formative elements in national sentiment, and is also deliberately developed as a means of achieving the goals of nationalism. But more positively, these older elements of society and culture are reformed and fused with the new common desire to create an independent nation-state.

No doubt the division of peoples into small tribes gives certain special features to nationalism in Africa. The national movements are organised within the boundaries drawn in comparatively recent days by the European powers, and these boundaries are artificial. There has thus been an unusual plasticity in the material for nation-making; and the future boundaries and groupings of new states are still uncertain. In such a situation, the wide reaction against racial subordination gives nationalism its main emotive force, and encourages a sense of common Africanism. This is enhanced by the presence of European settlers in a position of domination over the African majority in several states. In the next few years, the ecumenical movement should give special attention to the study and Christian evaluation of these and many other unique features of nationalism in Africa. Our consideration here is in very large measure limited to the characteristics common to the nationalism of Asia and Africa.

With the attainment of political independence, the nationalism of several Asian and some African countries has entered a second stage of development, which is also characteristic of Latin American nationalism. The objectives of many post-independent nationalisms are fourfold: 1) To consolidate national unity achieved through national struggle, and to resist the forces of disintegration in the new nation-state arising from tribal, linguistic, regional, caste and other separatisms. 2) To build political democracy, guaranteeing fundamental rights of the human person and minority groups. 3) To engage in a planned economic and social development of the nation. 4) To achieve recognition of status and make its contribution to the community of nations. Every young nation has to face tensions and conflicts between these several purposes of nation-building. For instance, an exclusive emphasis on the consolidation of national unity in many cases may lead to infringement of democratic liberties of individuals and after the formal attainment of political independence this conflict will be more evident. Similar tension

exists between economic development and democracy. In the present world the independence of a nation requires the working out of a creative relation of inter-dependence with other nations ; and here tremendous tensions have to be faced because of the carry-over of psychological attitudes of the colonial period. Some of these tensions are discussed elsewhere.

These two kinds of nationalism find their moral justification in the fact that they are a means of emancipation of dependent peoples. Such emancipation is to be welcomed and encouraged by the Christian Church. The concept of the "Responsible Society" implies that men are called to accept responsibility to God and their fellowmen for the choices and decisions on which the life of their societies is based ; and responsible participation in social and political life can only be achieved where each national group or unit can express itself in freedom. Therefore these nationalisms should not be equated with that aggressive nationalism which seeks to dominate other peoples or an isolationist nationalism which denies responsibility for other peoples. Nevertheless it is necessary to be clear that even a legitimate movement of nationalism expressing the urge for political freedom or for nation-making has in it the seeds of perversion.

By its very nature as a power-political movement, the spirit and methods of nationalism are in great measure conditioned by the structures of power against which it struggles ; and it involves traditional and modern social conceptions and values which tend to become ideologies. In many cases, a great deal of responsibility for driving nationalism to extremes may lie with the external political and economic powers and colonial administrations. Destructiveness may arise also from within — from egoistic motives and purposes as well as from adopting right purposes with self-righteousness zeal. Therefore even the most constructive nationalism needs to be guarded from the domination of destructive tendencies. This the responsible nationalist leaders themselves recognise. Very often the struggle of responsible nationalism against irresponsibility within is as

acute as its fight against external enemies. Several ecumenical study conferences have indicated the points at which the constructive character of the struggle for national selfhood in areas of rapid social change is weakened. Some of these are as follows :

1. When nationalism is based on the idolatry of the nation, it leads people to look upon the nation as the Messiah, the agent of total human redemption. This not only perverts nationalism but also leads to a denial of supra-national realities whether human or divine. Nationalism thus becomes a law unto itself, and everything is permitted.

2. Basically, nationalism in Asia and Africa is, as has been stated already, the awakening of the peoples to a consciousness of their human dignity. Therefore it is normally associated with a concern for personal freedom and social justice. This has often come to them through the impact of Western culture and Christianity. It is significant that the leaders of the national movements are people educated in Western culture and very often in Christian schools. They may discriminate between what is good and what is bad in Western culture and seek to reinterpret indigenous traditions in terms of these new social values. But sometimes, in reaction against a total rejection of indigenous traditions or for the sake of militancy against a Western power which has itself lost its understanding of liberal aims, nationalism tends to reject Western culture totally and surrenders itself completely to traditional gods and values. In this case, nationalism loses all principles of discrimination, and in the long run the very idea of personal dignity and social justice is also lost.

3. In a situation where the forces of disunity are strong and are exploited by alien and indigenous vested interests, the nationalist cause needs an ideology capable of uniting the people and stimulating and rationalising their urge for freedom. But once independence has been achieved, the psychological condition may continue to express itself in a tendency to absolutise the State or its leaders, demonstrated by a hypersensitivity towards criticism

and a demand for absolute loyalty. This is dangerous to the constructive character of nationalism.

4. Constructive nationalism concedes the right of every cultural, ethnic or racial group to contribute to the common struggle for national selfhood. Any denial of this right will lead either to suppression of certain groups or to communal violence. The report of the East Asia Christian Conference speaks of the danger of a majority cultural or ethnic group or party identifying itself as the nation rather than as part of it, leading to the suppression of other cultural ethnic groups and parties. It also speaks of minority groups destroying the nation by their demand for separate political self-determination. In this connection, there is need for a study, within the context of Asia and Africa, of what constitutes nationhood, and of the conditions of a visible nation-state.

In the Latin American countries, nationalism, justified by the desire to be economically free, often acquires, in conservative and strongly nationalistic parties, an exclusive character. This includes the pretention that the nation must be identified with the Roman Catholic Church, which is detrimental to other Christian and non-Christian groups.

5. The nationalism of a dominant minority group which has made a significant political, economic or cultural contribution to a country, may lead it, out of a sense of insecurity, to prevent the majority groups in that country from sharing fully in the government. This will all too easily result in the majority adopting an exclusive nationalism in their struggle for political rights creating a dangerous gulf which has to be bridged before nationalism can become inclusive and constructive.

6. The 1958 Conference on Specific European Responsibilities Towards Areas of Rapid Social Change pointed out the need for keeping in view the implications of the new nationalism and the newly independent sovereign nation-states for international co-operation, at both the political and economic level. These implications are not confined to the relation of Asia and Africa

to the West, but apply also to international relations among neighbours in Asia and Africa. Even a nationalism which is constructive in relation to the nation's inner life has difficulties in this field. These are made much worse when nationalism is based on a spirit of isolation from the world community. This isolationism may, in part, be a reaction against colonialism or result from a justified fear of losing a newly-won independence. But there is need for the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America to remember that in the modern world, no nation does have or can have unlimited sovereignty in political and economic affairs and that national independence should be understood in terms of international inter-dependence. The United Nations Organization provides a context within which new nations may work out creatively their place and role in the community of nations.

VII. Christian Participation in Nationalism

What is the Christian approach to this nationalism of emerging peoples? The following points are intended to suggest the outline of this approach.

1. Since the Church believes in the providence and redemption of God it can recognise the upsurge of aspiration to human freedom and social justice as a movement of the spirit of man which God can use for the service of mankind. The churches therefore should consider that emerging nationalism are potentially able to bring hitherto suppressed peoples into the stream of world history and to provide freedom for men and women to make the choices of human destiny. There are other questions concerning the place of nationalism within the providential purpose of God which require further theological study.

2. The missionary movement which led to the founding of the Christian churches in Asia and Africa became in the course of history associated to a considerable extent with the Western cultural and political expansion so that the Church and Christianity appear to many in these lands, including the younger

generation of Christians, to be too closely identified with Western rulers. Very often, when rejecting Western rule, they tend to reject Christianity also and become hostile to it, so that men and women who enter nationalist politics are often lost to the Church. (In Latin America, the situation is different in that the involvement of Roman Catholic Christians in the nationalist movement often implies an active participation in their Church). Along with this goes the attitude of many elders and ministers of the churches that Christianity is a purely spiritual religion of personal salvation and has nothing to do with political questions. This non-political idea of Christianity has strengthened the feeling among Christian young people and politicians that Christianity is indifferent to the real concerns of life in society and State, and they leave the Church, considering it as at best irrelevant. There is a need for the Church in Africa, Asia and Latin America to renew its understanding of the Lordship of Christ over the whole world and of the ecumenical character of the Church's being. This will help the churches not only to disentangle themselves from a false identification with Western culture and politics, but also to take a positive attitude towards the struggle for freedom and nation-building.

3. The Church's participation in nationalism must be positive and responsible : it should be a response to the call of God to bear witness to his purpose for the world and his concern for all men in their concrete situation. Therefore, it will also be a critical involvement and not a total one. When nationalism demands the total loyalty of the Church and its members, we have to obey God rather than man. God is not an instrument of nationalism ; He is its judge and his word is transforming power. Therefore, the Church's struggle for the freedom to worship and witness to Christ as Lord of the nation, to keep its fellowship open to all men irrespective of colour or other communal affiliation, and to have relations with churches outside the nation, is at the same time its contribution to the development of a healthy nationalism.

4. Where imperialism or nationalism has become idolatrous or absolute, the Church may still serve the nation by suffering at its hands. Such suffering is a witness to the Lordship of Christ over the nation and has a redemptive function.

Christian Dilemmas

Christians as members of the Church and committed to the Gospel of Christ face a great many dilemmas as they seek responsible participation in nationalism. The following are among the most important.

1. There is the perennial conflict between the demand of love and the power-political methods thought necessary if nationalism is to succeed. The problem of violence is one of the most acute forms of this conflict of principles which the Christian faces.

2. Perhaps the most difficult of the problems confronting the Christian is that between his natural identification with his own racial group (or sometimes an economic or social group) and his Christian involvement in the society in which he finds himself. This is particularly acute in those areas of Africa where government is still primarily in the hands of Europeans and where the African nationalist movements are agitating for the establishment of societies where the African will be assured of his share in government and of his fundamental rights. Here both Europeans and Africans attempt to rationalise the moral uncertainties and frustrations, their uprootedness and their sense of disassociation from many of the normal human relationships and associations. The European has developed a racial myth based on a false image of the African. On the African side, the racial myth in its most extreme form claims that everything European must be rejected and sees in "black nationalism" both unity for the present and self-government in the not-too-distant future. The European or African Christian, trying to move towards the other race in reconciliation, challenges thereby the racial myth of his own race, and so begins to lose contact

with them and his opportunity of influencing them. It is in this "no-man's land" between the two myths that the Christians must stand and suffer.

Methods of Participation

1. The main method of Christian participation in the nationalist movement is through individual Christians who become engaged in political action. But it requires that the Church face its task of pastoral ministry to those so involved.

2. There is place for lay Christian organisations formed especially to relate themselves positively to the nationalist movement and to educate the members of the Christian community on the motives and aims of a constructive nationalism. The Perkindo of Indonesia and the Indian Christian Association have been attempts of this nature during the struggle for national freedom in these countries.

3. The National Christian Councils may initiate studies not only on political but also on the basic social and cultural problems of nationhood and nation-building. Study centres have been established for this purpose in different parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America in recent years. The Councils may also give their considered opinion on matters of national importance.

VIII. Relation of the West to Emerging Nationalisms

A special responsibility lies with Christians of the West in relation to these nationalisms. Wherever their own governments still administer a colonial territory, they should seek to understand the situation there and help the governing authority to appreciate the nature and strength of nationalism. They should also press for such bold changes in the central and local governments of the dependent territories as will enable them to pass into the second stage of nationalism within a pattern of government which can withstand the strain of the first years of independence.

In this task administrators and civil servants with a sense of vocation have an important contribution to make. It is not enough that colonial officials carry out their own duties conscientiously. Looking forward to the moment of the transfer of power, they should also prepare an indigenous Civil Service, who can take over their responsibilities when they depart. Training of the indigenous Service requires more than formal education ; it means sharing responsibility with the members of that Service in the whole range of administration and providing them with the necessary experience. The colonial civil servants should be prepared to stay on even after the transfer of power, if invited by the leaders of the independent government.

The Western churches and missions themselves must press on with the training of national church leaders and give them opportunities of leadership, so that when the Christian churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America comment on the results achieved by a newly independent government in the several functions of the State, those who speak will be themselves citizens of the country.

One of the most valuable contributions the churches in the West can make is in encouraging their constituents to accept leaders from the Younger Churches in their own life and in urging their overseas constituents to do the same.

Where an emerging nationalism is that of a majority group within an organised state, Christians in both groups, majority and minority, experience a spiritual tension as they make a bridge between the groups. African and European Christians are in this position in parts of Africa. Each is called to stand loose to the extremes of nationalism and so within a single state to learn in practice the meaning of "supra-national." This is a costly experience. Such Christians will be given strength for their calling through the fellowship of the worldwide Church, particularly if they know that Christians in the West are seeking at like cost to themselves a supra-nationalism which crosses their own long established state boundaries.

PART THREE

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

I. Economic Change — Its Dynamic Nature and the Opportunities it Provides for Men

II. The Christian Attitude towards the Development of the World's Resources

III. The Fundamental Conditions of Efficient and Responsible Economic Change

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Economic change and the churches

Dilemmas and opportunities

Perfection impossible

PART THREE

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

I. Economic Change — Its Dynamic Nature and the Opportunities it Provides for Men

A brief description of the various forces which are stimulating rapid economic change serves to indicate the complexity of the problem. A truly faithful discharge of Christian responsibility in the modern world requires a sound understanding of the extraordinary economic changes which are taking place, reshaping the lives of people and posing a wide range of ethical issues.

Internal Economic Drives

Among the more important economic forces making for rapid social change within Africa, Asia and Latin America are these:

— The search for a fuller life and freedom from want. In Africa and Asia people have awakened to the fact of their age-long poverty and misery and are aware that this situation need not exist, and that by human effort the riches of nature can be used to overcome problems of disease and want. They are impatient to discover the secret of the higher standards of living which other countries enjoy.

— The impetus of nationalism. Nationalism is a powerful drive challenging the old static forms of economic life. The dynamic nature of economic change in most countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America is closely related to their desire to be free from economic dependence on the West and to increase their bargaining power in international affairs. Even relatively small countries feel obliged to engage in heavy industrial development to maintain their economic, and thereby their political,

independence. This leads for instance to demands for steel industries not only for economic reasons, but also as symbols of economic power.

— The rapid increase in population. The most reliable demographic estimates indicate that the population of the world will double, and for many parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America will more than double, within the next thirty years barring drastic changes in birth and death rates. The governments of the countries facing such rapid population increases have the problem of providing the means of livelihood and work for all these prospective new citizens. This alone is a powerful stimulant to economic change and to plans for a continuously rising rate of industrial growth and development.

Economic Drives from Outside

The internal drives for economic change are intensified by equally powerful forces working on these countries from the outside.

— The world market. Expanding world trade offers the hope of economic gain for all countries. At the same time, Africa, Asia and Latin America must meet the competition of the more industrially advanced countries of the West; they find that foreign imports drive out their domestic industries, while at the same time they have to expand their exports to pay for necessary imports. They must accept new methods of production, and constantly struggle to maintain technical efficiency. The pace of economic change is thus very much determined by the western industrial countries which are themselves undergoing a startling transformation of economic life, and the pressure can be very great. Japan is a good example of a country that has tremendously accelerated the pace of its economic development to maintain its share in the world market.

— The standards of consumption set by western countries. One of the greatest forces working for economic change is the western pattern of consumption which is demonstrated to the entire

world by modern means of mass communication, advertising and promotional activities. This sets a style of living for people of countries whose economies may have very little capacity for supplying such new wants. The induced demand for new consumer goods thus accelerates the demand for change.

— The on-going economic and technical revolution. The attraction of the scientific and technical view of life has proved to be world-wide. Technical and scientific education forces the pace of change and helps to break down old methods of production and distribution.

The pressure of these and other factors on the human situation provokes both great hope and great anxiety : great hope, because of the promise of a new life which is urgently demanded and which will come as people respond to the challenge of needed growth ; great anxiety, because of the many new and destructive forces to which people are subjected. In every situation there is the threat or the reality of social dislocation and division and the breakdown of traditional institutions ; and there is the spiritual and moral confusion of people subjected to the strain of shifting the base of their life from the pre-technical village community to the industrial town or city, from peasant farming to the highly organised industrial factory.

On the other hand, it is evident that the economic revolution will go on. There is no turning back. People may suffer from change, but they still hope to benefit from it. It is irresponsible to try to solve present problems by standing still or by ignoring the economic revolutions of our times.

II. The Christian Attitude towards the Development of the World's Resources

In many pre-industrial societies men had little choice but to divide up what meager possessions they had, and little hope of rising above that level. Indeed, throughout most of human history poverty of material possessions has been the typical

lot of man. But now, with modern industrial and economic development, the means are at hand to provide the material basis for much higher levels of living. This does not, of course, guarantee spiritual peace or freedom, for the quality of human life cannot be measured in abundance of possessions.

What, within the purpose of God, may be the significance of these higher standards of living? Economic growth takes place under God's providence and judgment and in many ways shows forth His grace and love. Potentially it provides opportunities for the development of each person, for the enrichment of the quality of human living, and for that subduing of the earth and exercising dominion over it of which the Bible speaks. But sin corrupts men and prevents them from fully realizing these objectives. We need God's forgiveness for our misuse of His resources and our disobedience to His divine will.

It is urgent for the churches to give far more attention than they have in the past to the Christian concern for these matters. As the East Asia Christian Conference at Kuala Lumpur in May 1959 reported:

> "The Church must endeavour to discern how Christ is at work in the revolutions of contemporary Asia... The Church must not only discern Christ in the changing life but be there in it, responding to him and making his presence and lordship known... The Asian countries are engaged in a struggle to realise a vast programme of social and economic development. As Christians, we are concerned with that struggle because it is, in several important respects, an expression of man's struggle to give meaning to his life."

There are a number of specific fields where Christian concern to give meaning to man's life ought to be made clear in economic development.

(1) *Standards of living*

The "standard of living" is a useful but not an absolute measure by which to appraise economic development. An acceptable

standard of living is defined in widely different terms and depends on prevailing circumstances. It is right and Christian, however, to insist on the need for a reasonable level. It is up to the consciences of people in each land to decide what is reasonable and what is exaggerated.

We are so corrupted by sin that we find it difficult to see what God wants us to do with our high standards of living, where we have them. It may seem absurd to try to enable others to enjoy them and to spread economic development throughout the world, if we are not clear either why or how men should enjoy these possible benefits of improved productivity. On the one hand, we are in danger of a too easy acceptance of the riches we enjoy, ignoring that they all come from God, and of making wealth of material possessions into the goal of life. On the other hand, we may be tempted to be fearful of the new life offered to us, preferring to live in the world of poverty to which we have become accustomed. These dangers require constant vigilance and study.

(2) *Tradition and change*

So much of Christian tradition is built upon the foundation of previous static and agricultural societies that we need to be particularly alert lest we fail to come to terms with the new opportunities we believe God is setting before us. We need to be sensitive to what is good in the traditions of the past, but ruthless in casting out what has proved harmful or is irrelevant to today's problems. This is another field where much more close study is required.

(3) *The use of the world's resources*

We need also to look carefully at the use of the world's resources for the good of all men. In the world in which we live men are interdependent. The development of modern economies reveals the community of mankind, enormous as are the problems it creates for us. Underlying all the disruptive forces at

work in the world, we can see modern economic trends which have a tendency to bring men together and make their conditions of life more nearly equal.

But if these are the underlying forces, there are often more obvious ones which reveal in all their stark crudity the divisions and differences among men. Perhaps the most bitter fact in the world is that it is divided between those with white skins in relatively rich countries and a much larger number of men who have coloured skins and are desperately poor ; and within some countries there is a division between a small group of rich white people and a mass of poor coloured men. The Christian Church is largely made up of white people in the rich countries. In the world today the gap between these groups is not growing smaller, and in some respects it is clearly growing wider. The rich white "Christian" West is not as sensitive to this offense to God as the facts demand, while poor coloured countries suspect that the riches of the West have been increased by exploitation of themselves.

The Right Use of World Resources

We need to ask what God wants us to do in our sinful and yet redeemed world with the resources which He grants to us. All the resources of the universe and the gifts and skills we possess come from God. They are given to us to use to His glory, as is made clear in the Creation story in Genesis. This means first that we have them to offer to Him. In discovering and making use of the wealth of the earth and of the human mind we have some of our greatest opportunities to give Him the worship due to Him. This is as true of the exploitation of the riches of the earth as of the discovery of atomic energy or the creation of human civilisations. Men may abuse the powers they have been given, and sin makes them glorify themselves rather than God. But it still remains true that it is proper for man to glorify God in the use of the riches of the earth. The parable of the talents shows us that merely to accept passively

what we have, not putting resources to productive use, is an offense to God. To make use of what we have for widening the opportunities before us and for searching out God's will is, we believe, to please Him.

To use what we have to the glory of God means also to use what we have for the benefit of all men, regardless of their colour or the part of the world from which they come. For God looks on the whole human family as one. He does not give us resources and gifts for ourselves alone but that all may be enriched and all may worship Him.

All our resources come from God, are to be used to His glory, and for His purposes of justice and mercy. No man or country, therefore, has an absolute right to enjoy by themselves either the fruits of the material riches they happen to inherit, or the fruits of ability or effort. God does not draw boundaries of responsibility at national frontiers, nor can we. Nor is there a distinction between our responsibility for the use of material resources, whether these be the discovered or the yet untapped treasures of the earth, or the material inheritance that the past hands on to us, and our responsibility for the use of the human gifts and abilities we receive as our natural endowment or are given through the society in which we live.

Injustice in the unequal division of the world's wealth cannot be corrected merely by protest, nor by the work of a few men. It requires patient, continuous study of the complicated facts and actions at many different levels involving individuals, business, government, voluntary groups, inter-governmental organizations, and churches. In all these Christians have some part to play. Stewardship is not merely a matter of the use of our individual time and income; it also involves our actions as producers, consumers, voters and church members.

Nor can we deal with the tension that arise from the inequities and injustices in the distribution of material goods among mankind merely by redistributing money incomes or the surpluses of the rich. There is a danger that Christians may be satisfied with

charitable type giving (whether by individuals or governments) when justice demands coming to grips with the root causes of the conditions which require such giving. Our ultimate aim should be a situation where there is no unnecessary poverty among nations, and where each nation by the use of its own resources and abilities attacks its own conditions of poverty and contributes to the well-being of the whole. But even were this goal achieved there still would be the need for mutual helpfulness by both individuals and nations under many and varied economic situations.

Those with the greater resources and abilities have the greater obligations. This applies between countries as much as within countries. Here again a realistic acceptance of what is possible is required. But as was made clear in the report of the Consultation on the specific responsibilities of the European countries towards the areas of rapid social change (Odense, 1958), there is an enormous amount that can and should be done. We endorse that report and merely briefly refer to the fact that these responsibilities include not only technical aid and financial help (perhaps as a given proportion of national income), but also a recognition and correction of the ill effects on the poorer countries of western policies on immigration, tariffs and subsides in foreign trade, stabilisation of commodity prices, defence policies (with their huge allocations of resources diverted from the stream of useful production), use of surpluses (such as wheat, coal and shipping), and the whole trend of industrial development towards more or less self-sufficiency. Above all, the rich countries need to be aware of the impact of what they do on others. In many cases their contribution to economic development in Africa, Asia and Latin America is totally inadequate, as the Odense report makes clear.

Partnership in world development

We are not living in a static world. The resources available to mankind are continually expanding and will continue to do

so as long as we do not engage in fratricidal war or excessively foolish economic policies. We should not therefore be too greatly concerned with problems of redistribution; it is the pattern of development as a whole that will decide the issue in the long run. Our eyes should be set on the full use of all the resources of the world, material and human, for the benefit of all, and upon the continuous growth of these resources.

This is a world problem, and therefore the poorer countries also have their responsibilities. The greater their needs in relation to the poverty of their resources, the more must they exercise stewardship over what they have. What they want is not to become rich at the hands of the West, but to be able to stand on their own feet. They can only do this in the last resort, however much help they may receive, by their own responsible efforts. Above all, they must have the will to develop their economic life.

All peoples have a part to play in the development of the world. Those who have the resources and the skill can help others to develop. But they can only do this if they realise that all men have gifts to contribute. Together all men need to learn to use the gifts they are given. Thus they will learn to understand each other and work together for the glory of God and the help of each other. This should be the kind of sharing on which we concentrate in the second half of the twentieth century.

Spiritual dangers in economic development

Support of economic development in Africa, Asia and Latin America is, in our view, a responsibility of Christians toward God and their fellowmen. It does not, however, carry within itself any guarantee against new spiritual and moral dangers nor the assurance of an ultimate solution to man's deepest problems. This is an illusion from which the Christian view of man should free us and against which we should contend as we work with others to further economic development.

These dangers are latent in man's ignorance and in his pride and disobedience. They are revealed in all aspects of life, including the economic. We suggest a few of these dangers which appear at various levels of economic development:

1. Men do not necessarily know how to consume responsibly.
2. Men become absorbed in the means and techniques that make for an affluent society.
3. When men get richer they worship riches and forget God.
4. Society may become marked by new forms of social stratification, conspicuous consumption, and status seeking, as people look for marks and symbols of personal prestige and success.
5. Men may become slaves of the production machine and victims of the vast and elaborate apparatus upon which they have come to depend for material abundance.

III. The Fundamental Conditions of Efficient and Responsible Economic Change

Rapid economic growth and development of available resources depend on the right combination of large amounts of capital, labour and management. They also involve, however, people's views about work, and human relations in the economic field, as well as the willingness to accept new forms of life and the ability to make them meaningful for social living.

Capital formation

One of the indispensable conditions for economic development is that enough capital be accumulated and full use be made of what there is. There are important ethical issues involved in the processes of capital formation.

Capital formation is necessary in any developing economy (communist, capitalist or any other). The pace and character of economic development will depend on the relation between

the consumed and accumulated national income and on the choice of priorities for the necessary investments. How to balance the interests of the total economy with popular demands for improvements of living standards is a perennial issue.

This accumulation of capital and its proper use involves technical as well as political and ethical issues. One major problem is the mobilization of savings which are already available within these countries but not used for productive purposes.

Where capital is accumulated within the countries the issue often arises as to what extent is it accumulated at the expense of the living conditions of the workers and farmers. In countries with a predominantly rural population and agricultural production, the capital necessary for the development of a more industrialised production has to be saved to a great extent out of what the rural population produces. The extra output that results from higher productivity cannot be used only to improve living conditions, but also has to some extent to be shifted into investment for public services such as transportation, electricity, irrigation and for industrial development. This means shifting not only resources but also people from agricultural to non-agricultural work. Furthermore, the accumulation of capital out of agricultural income for non-agricultural investment raises questions about the ownership and control of the new capital. It would be dangerous, moreover, to ignore the need to develop a sound agricultural sector and its need for investment to increase productivity. Agricultural land is one of the most important forms of capital, and land improvement a vital kind of investment.

The total investment required for the economic development of a nation is so enormous that available indigenous capital is often far from sufficient. In such a situation, use must be made of foreign capital. This, however, raises another problem. Foreign capital, whether from governments or private sources, is looked upon today with suspicion in most countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. At the same time foreign investors

are wary of the risks involved. The present, tragic scarcity of capital makes it all the more urgent that what is available and acceptable be efficiently invested in terms of balanced long-range development. Beyond this, however, the psychological and political aspects of the problem must be faced by both the borrowers and the lenders. There will be little or no economic development if fear continues to prevent countries from seeking foreign capital.

From the standpoint of political and economic independence, the idea of indigenous capital formation has growing appeal in Africa and Asia. The example of the Chinese method of capital formation by the government using the labour force and what it produces to a large degree for purposes of economic development, rather than for immediate consumer production or for purely private purposes, seems to offer real hope to countries which have been struggling to develop economically without excessive dependence on outside help. This method of economic advance is costly in terms of human values, but the slow pace of economic development in Africa and Asia makes people willing to examine any measure which offers promise of more rapid escape from the vicious circle of low productivity, poverty and inefficiency. We still have to learn much about the compelling desire for economic change in Africa and Asia and the impatience to get ahead. Here is a point where the churches can do much to help people in Europe and the USA to understand the pressing demands of people for economic change and social welfare.

At present economic development in many countries of Asia and the Middle East is lagging behind requirements. The expectations and aspirations of the people are in danger of being frustrated. There is need for a fresh examination of the new steps and new programmes required and a fresh understanding of the obstacles to obtaining development capital.

In Africa, industrial economic development is still in its infancy, and if economic needs are to be met, there must be

preparation for rapid growth. This is a world-wide task because neither indigenous African economic forces nor administering foreign governments can supply sufficient capital and skill.

In conditions where capital is scarce it is inevitable that government must play a large role in the planning and use of capital investment. But efficiency and effectiveness are better guaranteed if there are also opportunities for private or cooperative initiative. Here is a point where economic advance is related to responsible use of freedom and the preservation of areas of voluntary action.

The trend of thinking in Christian groups in Asia on this point is worth noting. The statement of the East Asia Christian Conference (Kuala Lumpur, May 1959) on "the pattern of economic development" is as follows:

"The primary task in Asia is to secure freedom from want through responsible economic planning, without which the growth of the institutions of democracy will be seriously threatened....

"It is recognised by competent economists in Asia and elsewhere that economic development in the countries of East Asia involves planning by the state, implementation and control of this planning, the formation of new industries through government initiative and at the same time the stimulation of the co-operative movement on a wide scale... Several Asian nations have defined their goal in economic life as Socialism, or the Socialist pattern of society. This method of economic development is based primarily on practical rather than ideological considerations. In all these countries the state plans for development recognise the important role for private enterprise. But the magnitude of the social-economic development required in Asia today is so vast and pressingly urgent that it is impractical to rely primarily on private enterprise operating within the framework of the free market system.

"The practical and moral problems of carrying out a planned social and economic development programme cannot be over-

looked. Our Christian view of man and society requires us to call attention to the dangers of government bureaucracy coupled with the accumulation of power, the growth of an attitude which considers that man is only a unit in a mass society.

"Christians in Asia must continually reaffirm that the Gospel transcends all economic ideologies."

The development of cooperative capital-raising associations and credit unions requires special management skills and a new type of community relations which cannot immediately emerge out of the communal tradition of pre-technical societies. Educational programmes based upon Christian knowledge of the community relations involved in these cooperative enterprises could be a significant contribution to economic development. Christians can also contribute by education and experiment in the development of various types of enterprise in societies where there is a great need for increased productivity. We know of few examples where this is being done.

Management

Capital formation is only one step in securing industrial growth. The accumulated capital must be put to work and used efficiently. A second great need, therefore, is able managerial leadership; leadership which understands the responsibilities of its contribution to rapid economic advance. The ethical issues in connection with this factor are very important.

There is first the question of developing a socially responsible industrial leadership. Economic growth in Africa, Asia and Latin America, perhaps even more than in the West, requires that industry should work with government and other groups in society. Economic freedom in these countries may well depend on the possibility of evolving new conceptions of socially responsible industrial leadership. There is today practically no Christian discussion of this problem. The Church might well seek to stimulate new and creative thinking on the subject, particularly with persons in positions of managerial responsibility. The

Church will find it helpful to cooperate with universities and technical institutes in working out the ethics of responsible management relevant to the dynamic economic situation now found everywhere in Africa, Asia and Latin America. We have discovered only a few isolated examples of Christian thinking on this problem.

Responsible management is also needed in trade, commerce, and finance. Small merchants and shop-keepers supplying the goods and services people want, are important persons in the community. Credit is often required for special purposes. The manner in which the proprietors and managers of these and similar businesses conduct their operations is of great influence in economic development.

The hope and expectation of the people in an area of social change is for a rising standard of living. We must recall the basic fact, too often forgotten, that in the most elaborate and mechanically equipped modern factory the ultimate aim is precisely the same as that in the peasant farm or the village craftman's shop. The purpose of production should be consumption. It is frequently the case, however, that the realm of industry is regarded as a private arena for conflicts between labour and management. But wages, salaries and dividends are the rewards paid for labour, skill and capital devoted to the production of goods and services that people want. The Church, for the sake of the whole community, has persistently to remind governments, trade unions, and employers' associations that the real purpose of industrial organisation is to provide goods and services.

Labour

In addition to capital formation and responsible management rapid economic growth requires skilled and efficient workers. To secure the cooperation of the great masses of workers in rapid industrial development two conditions are important: *a)* the workers must feel that they are participants in economic

development and not tools of powerful acquisitive and exploitative business interests whether public or private; *b)* they must also be convinced that they are sharing equitably in the fruits of enterprise.

In many countries the position of the workers is not strong. Because of the weakness, insecurity and frustration of workers, labour relations are often unstable and disturbed; labour-management relations are not highly developed and are often marked by violence and suspicion on both sides.

Where foreign private capital is brought in, the relationship between the employer and employee often takes on a new dimension. That is to say, labour-management relationships become complicated by the national-foreigner relationship, with the consequence that the labour movement becomes nationalistic. Furthermore, in most instances this nationalism is augmented by labour's connection with political parties and its acceptance of socialist ideas.

In these situations the trade union's role is very important. It is not surprising that, as one of the principal means by which labour can express itself, the trade union movement in these countries, as elsewhere, is the object of all sorts of political and ideological forces.

Trade union organisation provides one important way for workers to secure their rights. Membership in a union can give the newly industrialised worker a needed sense of personal dignity and status, especially if it does not arbitrarily limit apprenticeship or impose a colour bar or follow other similarly restrictive policies. A strong union also provides the employer with an effective means of learning about the needs and hopes of the workers. In the Christian view, a strong union is a responsible and democratic one. Moreover, a democratic union is an important factor in the growth of a democratic society. Thus the concern of the churches for political freedom is directly related to encouragement of democratic workers' organisations.

The final bargaining weapon of the union is the strike, and it is important that legal recognition should be given to the right of organised labour to withhold its labour. Guidance in particular cases can be given only by those with knowledge of the circumstances involved. The churches should not say that all strikes are either right or wrong.

Because rapid industrialisation brings suffering to many workers, there is a demand for social and labour legislation. There are features of labour legislation in the fully developed industrial nations which are applicable to all nations, such as industrial regulations dealing with safety and health. There are principles and standards of labour legislation (e.g. those embodied in ILO conventions) which should be generally observed. But there are other aspects of the legislation of advanced industrial countries which cannot be transplanted. The aim in an area of rapid social change must be to deal with the actual situation, to protect individuals and societies against existing abuses, and not to attempt to create at once ideal labour conditions by legal action.

There is, indeed, a subtle political danger in the paternal imposition from outside of a ready-made code of social legislation. There can be so much protection that those protected never reach maturity. Democracy and independence grow from within, from response to and struggle against adverse situations. The churches should urge and support indigenous efforts to resolve problems of industrial welfare and security.

Our study has shown that the churches so far have little contact with the life and needs of the workers and their organisations. In a few countries, such as Japan, India and the Philippines, there have been some attempts to explore the Christian mission in industrial society, but even in these countries the churches' efforts have been too often influenced by an individual approach which fails to face properly the genuine problems of the industrial workers. What can and should the churches do ?

— Remember its central mission to bring the spirit of reconciliation where social tension and hatred prevail.

— Become more aware of the sociological and spiritual condition of workers and their needs : e.g. migratory workers and newly urbanised youth.

— Help workers and employers to come together for discussion of the problems of organising and running industrial enterprises.

— Stand resolutely against any form of forced labour.

— Help trade unions to find their responsible role in economic development. The churches must press for the rights of workers and support legislative and social action for the defense of these rights.

— In view of the crucial role of labour in forming new patterns of society in these areas of change, the Church can help in the development of a new ethos of labour relations adequate to a time of fundamental economic change.

IV. Choices, Costs and Values in Economic Development

Economic change and the churches

Economic change, economic growth and decay, and economic development and re-development entail costs in money and labour ; in human health, happiness, and usefulness. Choices made in one direction mean opportunities lost in another. There are effects on the family, economic institutions, government, church and every area of human life.

It is essential that the churches understand the real costs of economic development in terms of human values. They can foster a climate of opinion that demands critical study and discussion of economic choices ; challenge their members to exercise responsible judgment ; take intelligent action regarding alternative economic possibilities ; and remind nations that economic development is not merely a matter of money but is

primarily a means for making real man's yearning for a better life.

The churches are not called upon to provide an anaesthetic to dull the pains of economic change. They work, of course, to ease the shock of uprooted lives and to help the victims of social dislocation. But the churches should also make clear God's call to responsible, discriminating Christian action that will help to shape the course of economic development at every stage. Christian responsibility involves decisions as to whether a particular economic choice is really a moral or merely a technical choice. In the former case, responsible Christian action is required. In the latter, Christians should help to divest the choice of moral and ideological overtones.

Not every cost and consequence of economic development can be foreseen. Nevertheless, every effort should be made to avoid unnecessary human costs through wise and careful planning. Lessons can be learned from peoples and areas which have undergone or are undergoing similar economic changes, and specialists can warn of dangers. In the last analysis, however, human wisdom and the experience of others offer only *clues* to action, not *guarantees* of success.

Some dilemmas and opportunities

1. *Leadership for economic development.* There is no one group to whom leadership for economic development can everywhere be entrusted. In some lands it may be the central government, in others foreign firms, in others a cooperative communal authority, in others an indigenous business or professional class, and in still others a mixture of these or other systems. What matters above all is dedication to human well-being and sound social structures. In some situations, there may be no such dedicated group who can give leadership in informed, effective economic development. In such cases outside help may be imperative.

Leadership in economic development schemes cannot be left unchecked. Safeguards are needed : against too great pressure, whether governmental or private, to conform to some general pattern often unrelated to economic development ; against bureaucracy, whether in governments or elsewhere ; against the powers of corporations and against paternalism, whether private or public ; against arbitrariness, ignorance and corruption, wherever found ; and against the exploitation of men by any group.

A well-developed sense of social responsibility offers the needed balance between undue freedom of individual action and the stifling demands of social conformity. Effective planning for economic development requires the widest possible participation in the planning process and in the execution of the plans. There is an innate folk wisdom which it is folly to ignore.

2. *Charting courses of action.* It is sound to count all costs before launching economic development. It must not be forgotten that the cost of inaction, is a major one and that it is to be found in undeveloped personalities, primitive social structures, and unused resources. These costs must be measured against the sacrifices and disruptions that economic development entails.

Change can come too quickly or too slowly. There is no inherent merit in either a gradual or a revolutionary pace. Decisions on what is the optimum rate in a particular area ought to be made not only on technical and political grounds but also in recognition of moral and human values.

Economic development alters class structures and power centres, either deliberately or unintentionally. Economic measures may create — or destroy — an intellectual élite, a business class, a broad middle class, a body of bureaucratic functionaries, or an independent peasantry. The human values involved in such decisions need to be carefully weighed, taking into account both their short- and long-run implications.

In underdeveloped areas, the state normally must make fundamental economic decisions governing the balance between investment and consumption, between agriculture and industry, and between similar alternatives. Such fundamental decisions cannot usually be left to private initiative. The state can use its powers (e.g. taxation or import controls) to accomplish these purposes, but in so doing must weigh the danger to fundamental personal and social values. A person must have a wide range of freedom to make individual choices, even the freedom to make unwise choices. No restrictions based on race or other arbitrary distinctions are morally justifiable. But restrictions applied to all equally in the interests of accepted social and personal goals may indeed be both necessary and justifiable.

3. *Conserving the past.* Traditional values inherent from the past are often either idolized or summarily destroyed. Any area undergoing economic development needs to re-examine critically which values of the past ought to be conserved and which ought to be rejected. People may have to pay the cost of sacrificing or replacing symbols inherited from the past but never at the risk of losing fundamental human values. The study of the choices involved is an important requirement not only for churches in areas of rapid social change, but also for those in the West, if their nations' economic and social policies are not to produce more harm than good.

4. *International aspects of economic development.* What happens economically in the areas of rapid social change has relevance for the whole world. Economic decisions have world-wide repercussions ; the consequences of economic development have world-wide implications.

Developed countries should welcome the rapid growth of newly developing areas, even though changes will be required in their own economic structures. Adjustments to meet the impact of these changes should not have to be borne only by some workers or entrepreneurs. A collective responsibility for sharing the burden should prevail.

If there is general development of economic resources in all parts of the world, the ideal of an international division of labour on rational grounds would seem a realisable prospect. It is, however, at the moment unobtainable for political reasons and because of the resistance of diverse economic interests. But efforts should be made to strengthen all the forces making for international economic cooperation. Christians can help to ensure that the economic policies of their own nation show concern for the needs and wants of others.

5. *Standards of living and international relations.* Inequities in standards of living create tensions. This is true of both the inequities within a country between a few who live at wasteful levels and the masses who suffer from abject poverty, and the extreme differences between industrialised nations and areas in which populations are living at minimum subsistence levels. Christians should support and help to increase the social pressures which are operating to reduce these wide differences in standards of living.

Aid to areas of rapid social change need not necessarily require a lowering of the living standards in presently more favoured lands, but it may require the sacrifice of continuing increases in comforts. Some means must be found whereby the annual benefits of the increased productivity of industrialised nations could be shared with areas of rapid social change in sound schemes of economic development.

Christians need to be more sensitive to the consequences of all their choices about standards of living, both as they affect themselves and the people of other nations.

6. *The birth rate.* The success of medical, health, and sanitation measures in reducing death rates in areas of rapid social change, while birth rates remain at previous levels, creates a critical problem of population pressure for many countries. Its significance for economic development can be illustrated by estimates for India. If the birth rate continues at its present level, and assuming that successive five-year-plans will achieve their goals,

in thirty years the average living standard would be improved by 14%. Were the birth rate reduced by half over the same period, living standards would rise by 75%.

International migration on any significant scale at present appears to be an unrealistic solution to the population problem. It is unlikely that progress in medicine, health, and sanitation will be deliberately sacrificed to increase the death rate. The only feasible alternatives appear to be to reduce the birth rate, or drastically to increase production to sustain a sharply increasing population.

Perfection impossible

It is impossible to foresee an ideal pattern of economic development without difficult problems. Some costs in human hardship and misery are inevitable. It will often be necessary to work out proximate goals and least-harmful measures. Christians must accept the hard facts of economic life and be ready to take the necessary choices and to run the unavoidable risks.

PART FOUR

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

I. Introduction

II. The Rural Situation

Church and State in Rural Community Development
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III. Social and Economic Aspects of Urbanisation

The Urban Habitat
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PART FOUR

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

I. Introduction

Rural changes and the constant growth of urbanisation confront the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America with enormous problems of rebuilding communities on a new basis, both in the village and in the city. The impact of industrialisation on the social structure of the village is a problem of particular concern. There is increasing interaction today between people in town and country, in their outlook and ways of life. Improved transport facilities bring them together more frequently and closely than before. And where this interaction occurs the danger also increases of the weaker rural areas being exploited. The new urban areas are often an economic burden on rural areas. This is illustrated by the dependence of many African workers in Nairobi on their home-farms for an adequate livelihood. But where both sides are genuinely interested in the well-being of the other, the inhabitants of small country towns may help the economic development of the surrounding areas.

II. The Rural Situation

Between 65% and 80% of the population of the technically underdeveloped areas of the world lives in rural areas. These are generally traditional in their attitude to economic development and social change ; they are conservative and lag behind other areas ; they are often passive rather than active. Where economic development comes rapidly and social change is slow, great dangers arise for the social and spiritual aspects of life, and present a challenge to the Church.

It seems to be true that larger villages are more inclined to react positively to proposals from outside than are smaller ones. In all countries there is the special problem of the small

isolated village. In such situations people are placed in an increasingly difficult position because they cannot keep up with other parts of the country. Their plight requires special attention. The Church in such villages needs the support of the Christian community in the whole nation.

Migration to the towns is an important force in the life of a peasant society. On the one hand, a "rural exodus" reduces pressure on the land and gives opportunities for more rational farming. On the other hand, in sparsely populated areas so many able-bodied men often move away, that the life of the village is disrupted. The population becomes unbalanced in its composition, with too many women and old people staying in the village and with consequent serious effects. To avoid excessive migration and to attract new residents, it is necessary to make village life more attractive economically and socially, especially through education, and by providing new social activities.

Periodic migration, with people moving at regular intervals between town and village, as in Africa, frequently involves bad social and moral effects. At the social level changes occur in the traditional village scale of values, and at the moral level old standards are weakened. People who return to the village with its strong local traditions and pressures to conform to local mores, may find adjustment difficult after the relative freedom of the city.

Church and state in rural community development

Community development programmes for rural areas have been undertaken in different parts of the world by governments as well as by voluntary agencies. In general, the purpose of these programmes is to encourage popular participation in planned economic development and to persuade people at the local level to take the initiative in bettering their material conditions. Such programmes also help people to discover new ways of working together through local government and co-operative organisation. The following aspects of this community

development movement would seem to be of particular importance for the churches.

1. The churches have been pioneers in the field of rural community development in the areas of rapid social change. Today, non-Christian agencies and the State itself have entered this field. This requires that the churches should develop a new pattern of co-operation in community service with these agencies and with the State. This is not usually difficult, because the values and goals of community development are generally in accord with the Christian understanding of society. In many areas the churches must still take the initiative; and even in areas where the State has assumed primary responsibility the churches have the duty to pioneer in new experiments for community welfare.

Social welfare in Africa and Asia has, in the past, had a religious sanction. When the State takes over the responsibility of promoting economic and social welfare and introduces community development officers into villages, they have to carry out their programme without any such religious sanction behind them. And yet secular programmes which do not have a new religious dynamic may not be able to maintain their morale and may be unable to deal constructively with the old attitudes and behaviour patterns. Therefore, the Church has a special role to play in providing the spiritual foundation for new forms of community in the areas of change.

2. Community development programmes act as instruments of change in relation to traditional social attitudes and behaviour. Therefore State initiative and voluntary community action must be combined in a balanced way if both are to succeed. The State needs to develop special organs of government different from those required for law and order, and it needs to recruit civil servants with an understanding of the human aspects of social change. Their task should be seen as that of encouraging and stimulating voluntary community agencies. Above all, they must secure the participation of the village people in the planning and execution of projects. The village church has a special

responsibility to co-operate with the government and local community and to oppose bureaucratic tendencies as well as programmes which divide the community.

Villages differ enormously in the way in which they respond and react to influences coming from the outside. The relation of the village community to governmental authorities is generally so slight that the attitude of the village community determines whether a suggestion, or even an action, of the authorities will be seriously considered. This situation increases the importance of community development work. It is important to know why rural communities differ so much in their rate of receptivity and resistance to well-meant suggestions and proposals from outside authorities or private agencies.

3. Community development can succeed only if the State and voluntary agencies develop indigenous leadership. In some places, traditional leaders may themselves acquire a new outlook, but in most cases new leaders with new concepts of community leadership have to emerge. The problems of land consolidation, service co-operatives, co-operative farming, etc. involve the introduction of new techniques, organisations and ideas. These must be adapted to local circumstances so that people may not be uprooted violently.

4. Local government representative of the people is in the long run the only basis of democracy and good government. Political reforms at the local level should go hand in hand with changes in social outlook. Otherwise power falls into the hands of people who use it to strengthen old social groupings or class interests rather then a new sense of the total community welfare. At this stage of rural development in Africa and Asia greater direction and control from the national centre may be necessary. At the same time national party politics can create serious problems in local government. An inter-party agreement to exclude ideological and divisive party interests in community development is a necessity. At the same time, however, parties can be a positive means of education and participation in government

at the local level provided that their concern is primarily with the interests of the locality.

5. Most countries today have highly skilled technicians in the field of village life and agriculture. The various inter-governmental agencies such as the UN Technical Assistance Board, the FAO, the WHO and the ILO, are sending experts in many fields to a large number of countries. Ways of making these services available to the people of the village ought to be known and used by the churches. The necessary contacts have already been made at the international headquarters of several of these agencies by the World Council of Churches. These must be maintained and increased in order to help extend the influence of this large resource of dedicated, often Christian, lay men and women who are highly trained in areas in which village people need help. The churches can be of invaluable service by helping these people to find a ready reception in the village and supporting their efforts to improve village life. In many cases the village church only needs to know where to find the answers to the problems faced, and not to set up separate programmes.

The Village Church and Community Service

In all of its programme the village church needs to be mindful of the dominant psychology of rural people. Its methods and approaches will take account of this human reality. Where changes have to be made in the interests of sound social and economic development, the churches will seek to avoid alienating its members by unwise measures. At the same time, the village church dare not give way to the ingrained notions of its members so much that it becomes the last stronghold of reactionary elements in its community.

The village church which is faithful to its task as the Lord's Servant, should be concerned with the whole life of the village. It has not only a priestly and a pastoral role but also a prophetic and serving function. Unfortunately the influence and witness of the church in the village is often greatly limited by

denominational divisions. Where there is more than one church in a village, methods of cooperation among them must be discovered. In some countries the village church is very weak and has difficulty in carrying on a service programme; ways must be found to strengthen such churches for their ministry. Increasingly the village church has the task of preparing its people for a new life in the changed village or in the towns and cities to which many of its people will go.

Improved training of pastors and lay leaders for their service in village life as well as in church matters is one of the great needs of the rural ministry. They need to be better trained in the relevance of the Christian faith to the decisions of daily life and in new methods of teaching the faith to village Christians. The importance of leadership training is self-evident to all who are familiar with the problems of the village church.

A vital church will be sensitive to those needs of community development which are not met by other agencies. It may in some cases help directly to improve economic conditions for the people, which may mean encouraging the development of village industries and the introduction of new techniques. There is today a great demand for technical assistance by church agencies at the village level for purposes of economic development. There is a clear lack of personnel with the necessary skill in this field. In relation to local government the church should encourage the formation of village councils, and invite the various village organisations to consider how they might meet together the total needs of the village people. Recognising the important place that women have in the family and in the life of the village, the church must discover ways of helping them to make their contribution to the social life of the community. It must consider ways for lightening the many burdens that weigh so heavily on village women. A vital church will work for the renewal of the family as the basic unit of the new community and prepare young people for family responsibilities in this new setting.

One of the important problems which confront people in villages is to discriminate between what is good and bad in the traditional social patterns and structures. As the churches in Asia have said :

> "...in many (Asian) countries the caste or traditional communal groups and the joint family system prevent the freedom of the individual to change his occupation or to develop new patterns of work. Traditional and negative attitudes toward life and toward work also are hindrances for the development of industrial society. And in many parts of Asia, the classical religions take a negative or fatalistic attitude toward the world and this hinders positive action for the development of the economic and social life."

In this process of community development the church can play an important role because of the principles of discrimination it has within its life, which apply also to the new forces at work in village life.

People in villages today are facing many difficult decisions and choices. The church can help them see the real alternative in terms of the moral issues and make them aware of the effect their choices have not only upon their own lives and upon their family, but also upon the total village.

III. Social and Economic Aspects of Urbanisation

Urbanisation is a factor of economic development which creates both new problems and new opportunities for the churches. The problems have often been described and explored, but the opportunities are very often ignored.

Can the churches find a new ideal for urban congregations and for urban community life and not merely cling to ideals derived from village or small town communities ? It is true that Babylon was a city but Jerusalem was a city too. Should not the Church put the temple, Christ, in the centre of the modern city ?

New ideas may be more readily acceptable in the cities, where traditional resistance to change is less strong. If the church avails itself of this specific opportunity, it may find it easier to permeate whole nations with a new spirit, especially in regard to such aspects as the following.

1. *The Urban Habitat*

Urban communities often suffer from the consequences of haphazard growth, bad lay-out, inadequate transport, poor housing and unsatisfactory amenities which might be avoided by sound town-planning. To mention examples : the distances between home and place of work or between home and place of entertainment should not be excessive ; public transport must provide sufficient accommodation for tired workers and housewives ; markets need not be an eyesore but an attractive centre of community life.

A city which is beautiful in its technical structures is worth striving for, and the chance to build it can be lost by greed or speculation and by slovenliness or laziness. The result is that men suffer from impure air and water, overcrowded homes, and dirty, noisy and cramped physical surroundings. It is wrong not to try to correct or abolish these social evils and to review, with regard to the general welfare, the usual standards of size and organisation for metropolitan areas.

In particular it is urgent for the churches to exert influence to secure housing conditions that will support a sound family life in the towns. Housing needs should not be exploited so that men are tied to unwanted jobs. Ideally, housing should be based on the needs of families, and not of bachelors, as has very often been the case in parts of East Africa. Social legislation may well need to take account of the fact that urban families often cannot support their relatives as well as rural families are able to do. In particular, it is important to overcome the system by which husbands and wives are separated for long years, because the husband has to leave his family in the village in order to hold a job as a migrant worker in the city.

2. *Urban Freedom*

The attraction of the city in areas of rapid social change is very powerful. Most people seek the higher income that a city promises. Very often, however, people flee to the cities to gain freedom from oppression, from conservatism or from overcrowding in villages. Some are overwhelmed by the new freedom and fail to make use of their opportunities. The positive value of urban freedom may, of course, be abused, but it provides an opportunity — augmented by the fact that the people who migrate often possess special qualities of initiative, energy and resourcefulness — for creative social development. This urban freedom is wrongly understood when any institution, including the Church, tries to reassert the paternalistic powers that may be customary in the villages. The churches have a special pastoral task in relation to the people that have moved to the city ; and in working with people who feel themselves to be emancipated, new avenues of witness need to be explored, as has been done by worker-priests, student chaplains, lay preachers, etc. It is important to take special heed of the physical and mental strain on urban housewives, who either have to cope with a new type of job, away from home, along with their housework, or who have not enough work to keep them busy. Wives as well as their husbands need the new opportunities open to them in cities.

3. *Urban Work*

Work in urban areas raises problems very different from those in the country. This is even more true in the areas of rapid social change than in countries of the West.

The report of the East Asia Christian Conference (Kuala Lumpur, 1959) in speaking about "The Impact of Technology on Traditional Common Life" has well said :

> "The introduction of technology in the countries of Asia has brought into existence the factory system, in which millions of rural agricultural people are coming to work. The nature of work in these modern factories is entirely different from

work in the farm and in the small cottage industry. Technology increases the possibility of work becoming monotonous, fragmented, and apparently less creative."

Urban factory work is usually regimented, more impersonal, more mechanical, more specialised, often not physically harder, but more nervously exhausting, than work in the village. This new type of work is an accepted fact of industrialisation, but the churches need to be mindful of the special demands it makes on the person. Industries, offices, transport systems, shops, etc., should be so planned that they are not merely places of economic activity, but places fit for people to work during eight or more hours per day. Industrial planning should be governed by the double consideration of economic usefulness and of the necessity to provide work for human beings under the most favourable conditions possible.

Urban work demands that a large number of people do their jobs at the command or under the supervision of others. This *dependence*, which occurs occasionally in rural circumstances as well (in plantations, big farms, etc.), is the rule in the cities. Therefore, labour relations are of prime importance. It is not necessary to repeat here what has been said earlier concerning trade unions. Today, in the new areas of rapid social change, the Church has to fight for the dignity of man in industry and must grow in its awareness of all those forces which degrade man and threaten the dignity of his labour.

Urban work takes place mostly away from the home. The churches should, therefore, consider the needs of man at his place of work as carefully as they consider the shorter time he is with his family or in his dormitory. The separation of home and work is unavoidable in the large city. It is necessary for the churches to search for methods of reaching the people who spend their working day outside the local parish. It is not right that church organisation and methods of work should be developed, as they so often are, to meet the needs of the relatively few people who do not follow the general pattern

of urban work. A special missionary effort is needed to reach those social groups that have been alienated from the churches in the processes of urbanisation, mainly the working classes and the intellectuals.

4. *Urban Leisure*

Hours of work in cities, however long they may be, are usually definitely limited, and there are definite portions of the day or the week devoted to leisure. People do not always know how to spend their leisure hours and this gives another new opportunity to the urban church. Fundamentally, what is required is the development of new types of community living which use the opportunities available in the city. The greater concentration of talents, the higher literacy rate, and other advantages found in cities are resources available to the churches. In so far as there are special dangers in the usual types of community amusement, the churches should concentrate their efforts on teaching people how to develop new and interesting alternatives and not only call attention to the dangers.

5. *Urban Democracy*

Whereas in rural conditions democracy often functions automatically irrespective of any formal distribution of powers, in the city it has to be organised and encouraged. A democratic local government system needs to be established even if it goes against the wishes of traditional (pre-urban) elements, vested economic interests, or governmental centralism. New ways have to be devised by which responsible citizenship and neighbourly brotherhood can be exercised in cities. The churches may have a special opportunity of assisting in the growth of urban democracy through the congregational life of the Christian community centre. An example of a responsible society, and Christian teaching about man and society and support of proper civic measures can prepare the way for greater individual participation in the affairs of the community. It is in local functioning that the roots of dynamic democracy are to be found.

CONCLUSION

It will be evident from this report how the rapid social change study has led us to suggest the need for new thinking about the task of the Church in relation to the social changes taking place in Africa, Asia and Latin America; and the need for new experiments to test the relevance of present Christian thinking in relation to particular problems.

The participants in this international conference from Africa, Asia and Latin America as well as from the West have expressed frequently during the meeting their appreciation of the significance of an ecumenical approach to these urgent problems.

We therefore send this report to our churches and our fellow-Christians for study in the hope it will help their thinking on these critical problems of today's world.

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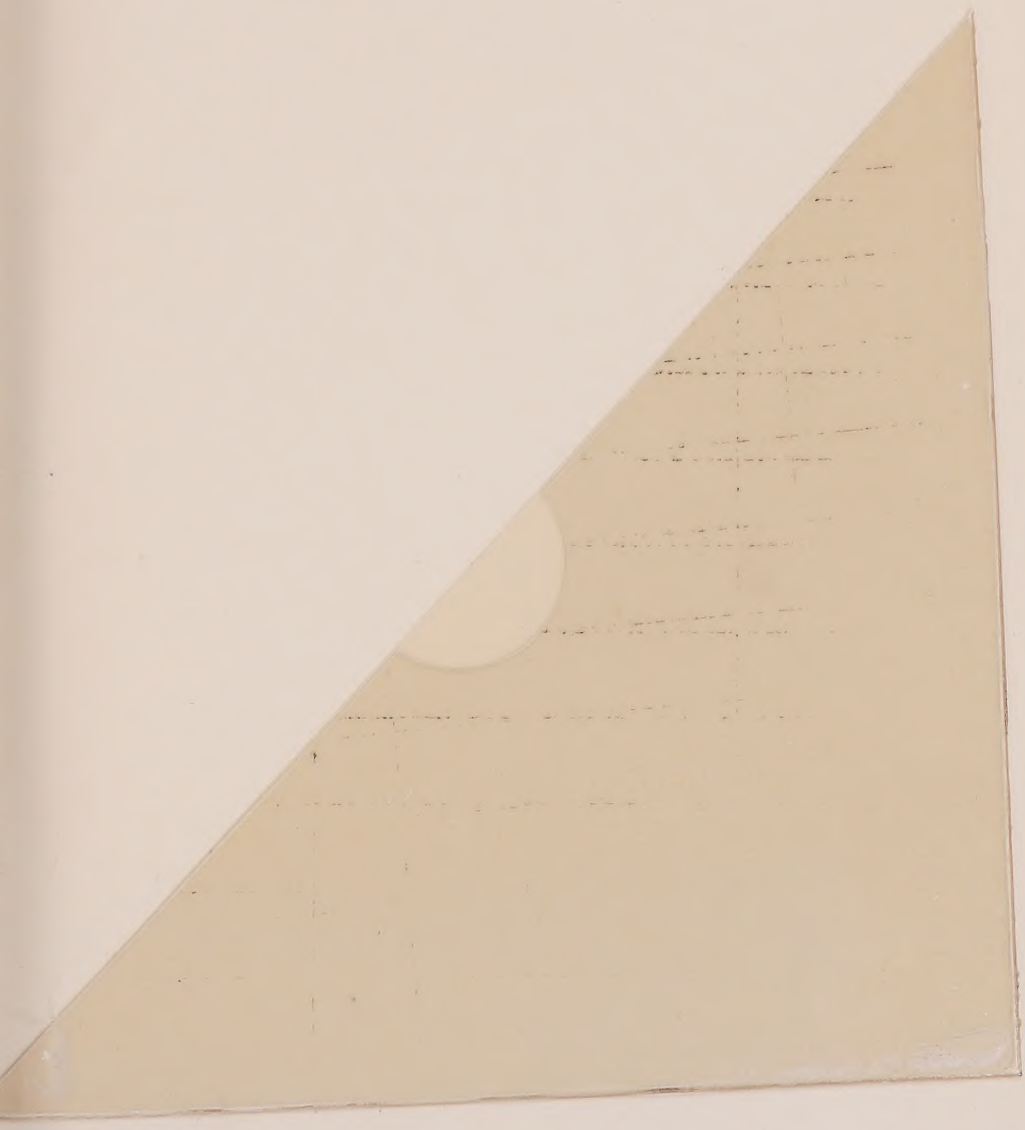

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